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THE WAFFEN-SS

41

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Introduction

This rewritten and re-illustrated revision of my original MAA title published in 1971 incorporates much new material, but still does not pretend to be more than a précis. I hope that at its own level it will prove a useful and inexpensive introduction to a vast and complex subject, which is covered in far greater depth in the source works listed in the bibliography.

The commentaries on the colour plates are so arranged as to form a brief general description of the normal W-SS uniform and insignia practices, as confirmed by photographic evidence. There is obviously no space here for the many variations, but common areas of variation are mentioned. I believe that virtually all major uniform items and types of insignia worn by front-line troops are either illustrated or described. The authentication of *individual* insignia, such as collar patches and cuff titles, is a jungle in whose tangled depths researchers better qualified than I may be heard thrashing about.

Wartime regulations were complex, sometimes self-contradictory, and often bore little relationship to physical realities. Supply shortages were common; local manufacture at unit level was not unknown; some items were authorised in writing, even illustrated, but never manufactured, while others were made but never issued. The lucrative forgery of these insignia for post-war collectors has muddied the water still further. For the purposes of this book I have illustrated in the plates only those insignia whose use in wartime can be confirmed by authenticated photographs —and I am well aware that retouching of original photos to lend spurious authority to post-war fakes is not unknown. Where areas of doubt exist, they are identified.

In preparing the colour references I was at some pains to avoid 'composite' figures in combinations of uniform items and badges assembled from different written and pictorial sources. I have taken some small liberties, since my aim was to illustrate as many items as possible; I have sometimes combined on one figure items worn by two different men of the same unit at the same date, where such combination violates no known

SS-Stubaf. Max Wünsche, whose distinguished career with the 'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler' in Russia brought him a regimental command in the 12. SS-Pz. Div. 'Hitlerjugend'; he was seriously wounded in Normandy. His film-star good looks, instantly recognisable in any wartime photo, are set off here by the officer's version of the W-SS pattern black Panzer uniform, and a private-purchase black shirt. Note officer's silver tunic collar piping.

regulation or photographically-supported practice. What I have *not* done is to add any type of insignia to any uniform item without photographic evidence of a serving member of that unit wearing that combination of items.

The huge number of W-SS units precludes a complete listing in this—or any—book. I have followed convention in listing divisions in number order, indicating in each case any smaller units from which their cadre may have been formed or expanded. I have noted at the end of each section the main combat units of the division in their definitive form. In this connection it is important to remember that the naming and numbering of W-SS regiments within divisions was not constant, but changed during the course of the war.

An SS-Oberscharführer—senior NCO platoon commander—of the 'Germania' Regt., SS-Verfügungsdivision, during the campaign in the West, 1940. At this date W-SS units were short of automatic weapons, and he carries a rifle; note stick grenades, binoculars and gas-cape bag.

Bender and Taylor's superb series of books, listed in the bibliography, covers this aspect in detail. An example might be useful. The regiment formed as '1. SS-Totenkopf-Reiter-Standarte', the first cavalry regiment of the Totenkopf security units, formed outside what is strictly understood as the Waffen-SS organisation, was later absorbed into the W-SS line of battle and renamed 'SS-Kavallerie-Regiment 1'; and in December 1943 the revision of the numbering system as a whole changed it at the stroke of a pen to 'SS-Kav. Regt. 15'.

As for the designations of foreign regiments, these sent the practitioners of the Higher Aryan Semantic Hogwash into a positive frenzy. The title had to indicate not only nationality, arm, and number within that arm; but also, by a system of bureaucratic euphemism, the degree of racial respectability of the population among which it had been recruited. This 'code' changed several times; and in order to warn readers off too obsessive an interest in this aspect, for the sake of their sanity, it may be instructive to examine one regiment's whole record of designations: the senior infantry regiment in the 14th Division.

Formed in September 1943 as 'SS-Freiwilligen-Regt. 1 (galizische)', it quickly became 'SS-Frw.-Grenadier-Regt. 1 (galizische Division)', and by late October 1943 was already 'SS-Frw.-Gren.-Regt. 29 (galizische Div.)'. January 1944 saw its transformation into 'SS-Frw.-Gren.-Regt. 29 (galizisches Nr. 1)', and late June 1944 brought metamorphosis into 'Waffen-Grenadier-Regt. der SS 29 (galizisches Nr. 1)'; but November 1944 saw a reappraisal of certain racial and political realities, turning it into 'Waffen-Gren.-Regt. der SS 29 (ukrainisches Nr. 1)'. In April 1945 the whole division became '1st Division, Ukrainian National Army', and internal titles and insignia changed yet again. The neurotic ditherings about exact titles in the higher-numbered SS formations had no military significance, and are gratefully ignored in this book.

There is one aspect which affects insignia research and which should be summarised, however briefly. In simplified terms we may say that a German citizen, a *Reichsdeutsche*, became a member of the SS when he joined the Waffen-SS military service; he was thus entitled to wear the

SS runes on his collar. The start of foreign recruitment faced the SS with a delicate question of racial acceptability, and the collar patches of foreign units depended upon the current view of their racial purity held by the relevant coven of SS witch-doctors. Some nationalities, such as Scandinavians and certain Western Europeans, were deemed worthy of the runes. Others could be termed Aryan by no stretch of the imagination, and their inclusion in the Waffen-SS for reasons of stark military necessity did not confer membership of the SS proper. They were thus given collar devices of some real or imagined national significance. 'Racial Germans'—*Volksdeutsche*—were men of definitely German stock resident outside the Reich; there were many tens of thousands of these, mostly in the territories of the former Austro-Hungarian empire. Acceptable to the SS, they often served in units whose enlisted mass was racially dubious; and in such cases they usually wore the divisional collar patch, and SS runes on the breast.

The practical point about this sort of nonsense is that regulations were neither consistent nor stable, and that insignia worn by any given unit must be individually researched. (Where photos show blank black right-hand collar patches, this may indicate either a W-SS formation at some transitional period, or membership of the Gestapo or SD—and since these organisations had other insignia of their own, such photos repay careful study.)

The question of morality cannot be ignored altogether. Some people believe that the record of atrocity which stains the name of the Waffen-SS renders any purely 'technical' study immoral, if not actually dangerous. In the melancholy knowledge that somebody, somewhere, would disagree violently with anything I chose to write on this point, I nevertheless feel obliged to add a brief note making clear my position:

Waffen-SS membership totalled several hundreds of thousands of men, and any generalisation is fatuous. Having said that, one must acknowledge certain generalisations based on unarguable matters of historical record. The Waffen-SS committed atrocities both on and off the battlefield. So occasionally did the Allied armies of the Second World War; and so, for that matter, have

Wounded teenage prisoner from the 'Hitlerjugend' Div. wearing the 1944 four-pocket W-SS camouflage tunic. (Imp. War Mus.)

Western armies since 1945. The record of the Waffen-SS in some ways resembles certain of those post-war colonial atrocities in that they too were the result of combat stress allied with a total contempt for the human qualities of the enemy and his civilian population. But in the Waffen-SS this contempt was deliberately fostered as a matter of ideology. While some atrocities were the work of individuals or small groups acting in the heat of the moment, as will happen in any army, in any war, there are plentiful instances of major atrocities carried out by large units, on superior orders, as a matter of policy. We know that Allied units sometimes shot prisoners; as far as I am aware, Western Allied units are not known to have massacred the whole populations of European villages. The 'Byzantine' SS formations, recruited among semi-barbarous peoples for anti-partisan warfare, had a particularly bad record, but the whole guilt cannot be passed on to them; low-numbered *Reichsdeutsche* formations were guilty of equally disgusting excesses. It is therefore

Men of the "SS-Heimwehr Danzig' photographed in 1939; they have camouflaged helmet covers but no smocks. Note early webbing Y-straps, and Totenkopf collar patches. After the Polish campaign they were absorbed into Totenkopf-Inf. Regt. 3 of the 'Totenkopf' Division, retaining their old cuff title.

permissible to say that in scope, in nature, in degree of official sanction, and in the attitude fostered specifically within the organisation, the Waffen-SS record of atrocity is worse than that of any known Allied or other German military force. It may also be useful to add that the 'total separation' between the battlefield units of the Waffen-SS and even more sinister organisations such as the Einsatzgruppen and the Totenkopfverbände—a separation of which post-war apologists make much—does not stand up to detailed examination; there *was* a division, but it was somewhat porous.

Having accepted all this, it remains equally true that many officers, men, and units of the Waffen-SS displayed again and again standards of courage, discipline and self-sacrifice which must command the respect of any soldier or historian. From a position of rather despised obscurity these units fought their way to a combat reputation second to none. Their iron reliability led to their employment as a military 'fire brigade', rushed from sector to sector to shore up collapsing fronts, or to sacrifice themselves in desperate counter-attacks, heedless of appalling casualties. Their purely military achievements qualify them for the interest and study of later generations. To deny this is surely to display a wilful blindness exactly equivalent to that of the naive or frankly sinister apologists for their undoubted crimes, who still trot out the same tired old lies in an attempt to obscure the darker side of the record.

The Evolution of the Waffen-SS

There is no space here for examination of the complex history of the Nazi movement in the 1920s–30s; it involved many different groups and personalities, by no means all of them subservient tools of Adolf Hitler. The most significant was the part-time, voluntary organisation of bully-boys known as the Sturmabteilungen or SA—these were the 'brown-shirts' or 'storm troopers'. A direct descendant of the Freikorps movement of 1918–21, the SA was headed by Ernst Roehm, as much a rival as an ally of Hitler; by 1929 its membership was more than a quarter of a million. In the early 1920s a tiny group was formed within the SA as Hitler's personal bodyguard; originally the 'Stosstruppe Adolf Hitler', this later became the SS—Schutz Staffeln, or 'protection squads'. Dispersed around Germany, the SS had no more than 280 members in 1929, and enjoyed no real independence of rôle or identity. In that year a colourless nonentity named Heinrich Himmler was given command of the SS, largely because he was totally 'safe'.

The amalgamation of several factions within the Nazi movement, and the steady penetration of various police agencies, brought about considerable SS expansion within the next five years; there were 30,000 members by 1933, against a total SA membership of three million. By June 1934 the diverging goals of Roehm and Hitler brought the two main Nazi factions into lethal confrontation. On 30 June—'The Night of the

Long Knives'—Roehm and his SA leadership were arrested and several hundred were shot. Apart from various police and Army units which played a supporting rôle in this crushing of a supposed coup, the SS provided the actual killers: for the movement-within-a-movement now boasted three battalions of trained, disciplined, full-time armed gendarmerie.

The period 1934–39 saw the expanding SS take over responsibility for political police work, and it extended its tentacles into many other areas of Party and government function. By the outbreak of war it would have been impossible to define exactly the rôle within the state of this huge organisation. Apart from direct powers, the SS employed a system of granting SS rank to functionaries in many governmental and semi-governmental bureaux and institutions, extending *de facto* SS influence over areas in which the organisation had no powers *de jure*. For the purposes of this book the armed SS troops—initially 'SS-Verfügungstruppe', and from 1940 'Waffen-SS'—may be treated as a distinct part of the Reichsführer's complex empire. Readers new to this subject may find it helpful to remember that during the Second World War the black-uniformed SS-men beloved of Hollywood drama were in fact simply the 'Allgemeine-SS' or 'general SS', whose function was mainly political and bureaucratic rather than executive. The 'teeth' arms of the NSDAP were the grey-uniformed Sicherheitsdienst (SD) security police, the plain-clothes Gestapo secret police, and the grey-uniformed military units of the Waffen-SS.

At the outbreak of war the Waffen-SS was an insignificant force. Hitler's experience with the SA had taught him to be wary of private armies; and at this stage he was careful not to provoke the Wehrmacht leadership, who were jealous of their rights as 'sole bearers of arms' in the Reich. Waffen-SS participation in Poland, 1939, and the West, 1940, may be seen partly as a propaganda exercise mounted by Himmler to enhance the prestige of his corner of the Nazi state; the upper levels of the Third Reich were always to be characterised by viciously-pursued personal and departmental rivalries. The failed chicken-farmer who now enjoyed awesome powers as Reichsführer-SS and national police overlord entertained hazy dreams of turning his hand-picked legion of racially and politically pure Aryan manhood into a sort of latter-day Order of the Teutonic Knights. Hitler saw the rôle of the SS after what was expected to be a short war as an élite and totally loyal political gendarmerie to control the Reich and the occupied territories. Both ambitions demanded that the Waffen-SS be given a chance to participate visibly in the Wehrmacht's victories. They were not expected to achieve much; but by 1939 they had been trained to a standard which made combat feasible. The ex-Army general who served as Inspector of SS-Verfügung-

Prominent among the European volunteer units was the Freiwilligen Legion Niederlande—note crudely-lettered early cuff title, and blue-over-white-over orange arm shield of the Dutch volunteers. The 'vertical Wolfsangel' right collar patch can be made out in the original print. Expanded into the 'Nederland' Bde., and finally into the 23. Div. 'Nederland', this unit fought with distinction on the Baltic coast.

struppe from 1936 to 1939, Paul Hausser, had in fact achieved a great deal, and the military showing of the Waffen-SS probably owed more to him than to any other individual. A combination of rigid physical selection, extremely tough military training, ideological indoctrination and parade-ground spit-and-polish had produced, by summer 1939, the following units:

'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler' A motorised infantry regiment of three battalions with integral light artillery, anti-tank and reconnaissance units. This premier W-SS unit was commanded by Josef 'Sepp' Dietrich, Hitler's old comrade from the gutter-fighting days. 'LAH' provided a battalion for the Austrian Anschluss in 1938.

SS-Standarte 1 'Deutschland' Similar composition but with four battalions. Took part in Sudetenland occupation of 1938.

SS-Standarte 2 'Germania' Similar composition to 'LAH'; took part in Austrian and Sudetenland occupations.

SS-Standarte 3 'Der Führer' Composition and experience as 'Germania'. (Note that officially these regiments dropped their numbers when awarded their honour-titles; I have quoted both, for clarity.)

In addition to these units, collectively termed the SS-Verfügungstruppe (SS-VT), Himmler also had at his disposal five regiments of 'Totenkopfwachsturmbanne'—'Death's-head Guard Units'. These poor-quality units were internal security police and concentration camp guards, commanded by the head of the KL service, Theodor Eicke.

The SS Goes to War

'LAH' and 'Germania' fought in Poland under 10th and 14th Armies respectively, and 'Deutschland' formed part of the so-called Panzerverband Ostpreussen or Panzer-Division Kempf. 'Der Führer' was sent to defensive positions on the West Wall. All were pulled back for reorganisation after the cease-fire. 'LAH' remained an autonomous motorised regiment, but received generous allocations of new equipment. The other three regiments were gathered in October 1939 into a formation named by spring 1940 'SS-Verfügungsdivision', incorporating artillery and other supporting services.

The most interesting decision concerned the Totenkopf security units. Three regiments served as occupation troops in Poland, but were then recalled; numbers of their personnel were assembled with other Totenkopf units, some SS-VT troops and Allgemeine-SS reservists into a field division—'SS-Totenkopf-Division'—under Eicke's command. This blurring of the distinction between SS combat troops and security police thugs stemmed from the tight restriction on Waffen-SS recruiting: neither the Wehrmacht nor Hitler, for their own reasons, wanted Himmler creaming off too many good potential soldiers. As police overlord Himmler was able to recruit 'security personnel' without these restrictions; and by transferring Totenkopf men to the combat units, and then replacing them by direct recruitment, he had a neat back-door method of expanding his fighting units. Ten new Totenkopf regiments were put in hand in 1939–40.

The part played by the Waffen-SS in the West in 1940 was much photographed but of little military significance—they represented, after all, only two divisions and a regimental group, out of 89 divisions employed. The 'LAH' and SS-V-Div. fought well; the markedly inferior quality of the SS-T-Div. was underlined by heavy casualties. (The Le Paradis massacre of British prisoners was instigated by a Totenkopf officer hysterical over the losses suffered by his ill-trained men while taking the position.)

Both 'LAH' and the SS-V-Div. (now named 'Reich') used their excellent motorised elements to good effect in the lightning campaign in the Balkans in spring 1941, and by the invasion of Russia in June the former had been awarded divisional status in name, if not yet in physical fact. 'LAH' served on the southern sector of the Russian front, and 'Reich' on the central sector; the Totenkopf-Div. served on the Leningrad front in the far north. All served strictly under local Army tactical command—there was as yet no question of anything approaching an 'SS-Corps'. Hitler still regarded Himmler's military pretensions as slightly comical, but had no objection to his potential élite security forces being hardened in combat and adding some prestigious medals to their tunics. He had also allowed Himmler to expand the Waffen-SS slightly,

although not at the cost of recruiting manpower better employed in the Army; and the method he used was to prove highly significant.

He had scrambled together one more hang-dog formation of Totenkopf guards, grandiosely entitled SS-Division 'Nord', just before Operation 'Barbarossa'. He retained under his ultimate control as police overlord another low-priority formation of former policemen, the Polizei-Division, who saw some fighting in France and occupation duty in Poland, but who were neither nominally nor 'spiritually' part of the W-SS at this date—although the SS eagle they wore on their sleeves pointed the way. Far more important than either of these divisions was a new formation with the ringing title of SS-Division 'Wiking', which was to march into Russia under Army Group South: for about half its strength was composed not of SS-men, nor even of Germans, but of volunteer recruits from the occupied nations of Europe.

That recruits were forthcoming was hardly surprising. Overrun with bewildering speed only months before, the Western nations had yet to feel the full weight of Nazi brutality. It was too soon for significant Resistance activities to provide a focus for patriotism. These countries already nourished genuinely populist anti-Communist political movements, which provided recruiters with a good first harvest and a natural conduit for their fine rhetoric about the 'anti-Bolshevik crusade'. Large numbers of volunteers were found in 1940–41, and throughout the war such units generally earned a high fighting reputation. Despite their emotive titles, however, it should be recalled that they always contained large numbers of Germans, and as the war drew on they were used as repositories for all kinds of odd foreign renegades. Their courage won their occupied homelands no hint of political concession; their privileges were limited to dying as German cannon-fodder. Alongside the 'Wiking' Division smaller volunteer 'legions' were raised for service in Russia, mostly with the Army but some with the W-SS from the outset.

The three 'classic' W-SS divisions and the new 'Wiking' fought hard in Russia, earning an altogether more respectful reputation among their Army comrades for steadiness in the face of grim conditions and high casualties; this reputation was not seriously impeded by the relatively poor showing of the Polizei-Div. and the disgrace of 'Nord'. In spring 1942 the Polizei-Div. was taken into the W-SS proper. At the same time another basically foreign division was formed. The 'Prinz Eugen' Volunteer Mountain Division was recruited from 'ethnic Germans' in the old Austrian empire, and was sent into action against the Yugoslav partisans in autumn 1942. That summer an eighth division appeared on the SS order of battle with the up-rating to divisional status of the SS-Kavallerie-Brigade—later, the 'Florian Geyer' Division. This was originally one of three Totenkopf brigades (the other two being motorised infantry) which operated behind the Russian front lines on security duty; these were under Himmler's control, being attached at need to

SS-Ogruf. Theodor Eicke; the former head of the concentration camp service, he was one of very few men associated with that infamous organisation of whom one has the satisfaction of reporting that he was killed in action, as commander of the 'Totenkopf' Division in March 1943. Here he displays the design of W-SS general officers' collar patches.

Typical manufacture details of a W-SS officer's collar patches in silver and black; the rank is SS-Hauptsturmführer or captain. (Courtesy late Col. C. M. Dodkins)

the forces of local Higher SS and Police Leaders. In time their regiments were gradually dribbled away as replacements for W-SS field formations decimated in the campaigns of 1941–42.

In 1943 the picture changed dramatically. The Army was discredited by defeat in Russia and Africa, and Hitler had been seduced at last by the appeal of Himmler's growing army of ironhard SS formations. Chopping logic about postwar responsibilities was now a luxury—Hitler needed generals and divisions who won battles, and Paul Hausser's recapture of Kharkov with the SS armoured divisions had just given him his first victory for a long time. The W-SS now underwent a rapid and enormous expansion, in which certain distinct elements may be traced. There were to be three new *Reichsdeutsche* armoured divisions to join the 'classic' divisions, whose armoured status was a fact long before their titles were officially changed to recognise their actual establishment. They would be joined by new formations of foreigners, formed around existing volunteer legions already serving in Army or W-SS uniform. Troops would be freed for the main fronts by passing anti-partisan tasks to ever more bizarre foreign SS formations, such as the Moslem 'Handschar' Division, which marked the total abandonment of the original racial limitations.

The proliferation and enlargement—on paper, at least—of foreign formations would continue until the end of the war. Between early 1943 and early 1945 the ostensible order of battle of the Waffen-SS rose from eight to 38 divisions. Many of these were purely fictitious, in the sense that orders for their formation and deployment seldom reflected their actual available strength or combat readiness. Several nominal 'divisions' fielded no more than a few hundred ill-equipped men scrambled together from *Volksdeutsche*; bewildered foreigners; Luftwaffe or Kriegsmarine personnel for whom there were no longer any 'planes, fuel, or ships; and marginal categories of police or Allgemeine-SS reservists, perhaps stiffened by members of a Waffen-SS training school. Bizarre as some of these formations were, however, it must be remembered that the élite SS Panzer and Panzer-Grenadier Divisions represented Germany's most effective troops in the last stages of the war, setting a standard unsurpassed and seldom equalled among the forces of any other nation.

Exact figures will never be known, but the best estimates indicate that some 180,000 Waffen-SS soldiers were killed in action during the war; approximately 400,000 were wounded, and probably another 40,000 or more were listed 'missing'. The entire establishment of the 'classic' divisions —'LAH', 'Das Reich' and 'Totenkopf'—were casualties several times over, so to speak; and the teenagers of the 12th Division 'Hitlerjugend' were still full of aggressive spirit after suffering losses of 20 per cent dead and 40 per cent wounded in four weeks' continuous fighting in Normandy.

The Divisions

An abbreviated note-form style is necessary for space reasons. Normal W-SS rank abbreviations are used throughout. Dates are indicated in month and year numerals e.g. '6.44' = June 1944. Where dates are given to the day, the English rather than the American convention is used; e.g. '1.6.44' = 1 June 1944, *not* 6 January 1944. Dashes are used before a date to indicate 'until', after a date to indicate 'from'; e.g. '-6.44' = until June 1944, '6.44-' = from June 1944 onwards. Entries are arranged in the following order:

Title of division, in definitive form; COs = known commanding officers; brief service history; MCUs = main combat units, usually qualified with a month and year; CP = collar patch if different from standard *Sigrunen*; CT = cuff title,

Typical cuff title styles. 'Westland' and 'Götz von Berlichingen' are in standard block lettering, the upper machine-embroidered, the lower machine-woven. (Below) is the Sütterlin script 'Adolf Hitler' title of the 'LAH'; the same script was used on the 'Hitlerjugend' Division title (N.B. not to scale). (Imp. War Mus. & author's collection)

in form which appeared on the insignia. *NB:* Omission of CP = wore standard runes throughout; omission of CT = no known cuff title. Insignia details are given in consistent form. Where they are simply quoted, the insignia in question is confirmed by wartime photos of it being worn, '. . . illustrates . . . .' means 'a photo of the insignia itself has been published by (source), but its wartime provenance is not confirmed, to my knowledge, by a photo of it in use,' '. . . unconfirmed reconstruction . . . ' means that the source quoted has published a drawing of the alleged design of the insignia, without photographic support having been published, to my knowledge. If CT lettering is unspecified, this indicates standard 'block' letters.

1. SS-Panzer-Division 'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler'

COs: SS-Obst.Gruf. 'Sepp' Dietrich (–7.43), SS-Brigaf. Wisch (–8.44), SS-Oberf. Mohnke (–2.45), SS-Brigaf. Kumm

Regt. raised 9.33. Fought in Poland 9.39: areas Lodz, Warsaw, Modlin. Brief occupation duty Czechoslovakia 10.39, then to Western Front. Advanced through Holland into France, and in action France, 10.5.40–25.6.40: murdered 80 British PoWs at Wormhout, 28.5.40. 4.41, advanced through Yugoslavia, Greece. 6.–11.41, advanced into southern Russia: Kiev, Uman, the Crimea, Rostov. Winter '41–'42, heavy defensive battles Donetz area. 8.–11.42, rest and refit N.France, occupation Vichy France. 1.43 to Ukraine; 2.–3.43, heavy combat between Donetz and Dnieper, recapture of Kharkov; 7.43, combat Byelgorod during Kursk attacks. Summer '43, occupation duty N.Italy; atrocities. To Russia, heavy combat 11.43–1.44. Spring '44, rest and refit N.W.France, Belgium. 6.–10.44, heavy combat Normandy, France, retreated through Belgium to Aachen area. 12.44–1.45, heavy combat Ardennes, retreated to Bonn area; elements responsible for murder 71 US PoWs Malmédy, 17.12.44. To Hungary 2.45; heavy fighting; retreated into Austria. 8.5.45, majority of division surrendered to US troops in Steyr area: 1,500 survivors with 16 tanks, from 6.44 strength of 19,700 men.

MCUs: 1.44: SS-Pz. Regt. 1, SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 1, 2

CT: 'Adolf Hitler' in Sütterlin script

Junior officer of 'LAH' photographed during the advance through the Low Countries, May 1940.

2. SS-Panzer-Division 'Das Reich'

COs: SS-Ogruf. Hausser (–10.41), SS-Brigaf. Bittrich (–12.41), SS-Brigaf. Kleinheisterkamp (–4.42), SS-Gruf. Keppler (–2.43); thereafter ten changes of CO, most prominent being SS-Brigaf. Lammerding (12.43–7.44, 12.44–1.45)

10.39, SS-V-Div. raised—see main text, 'Evolution of Waffen-SS'. In combat 5.–6.40 in Holland, Belgium, France, to Spanish border. 12.40, 'Germania' Regt. removed; –4.41, div. in occupied France. 4.41, took part invasion Yugoslavia: 5.41, rest and refit Austria. 6.–11.41, invasion of Russia, central sector: Smolensk, Priluki, Moscow area. 12.41–3.42, defensive fighting: Istra, Rusa, Rzhev. 3.–7.42, rest and refit in Germany; –1.43 occupation duty N.W. France. 2.–3.43, Russia, heavy combat Kharkov. Regrouped –7.43, then Kursk attack: Byelgorod, Prokhorovka. Further heavy defensive fighting 8.–12.43: Mius, west of Kharkov, Dnieper, Kiev, Zhitomir. 2.44 Kampfgruppe Lammerding still in combat, rest of div. to France for rest and refit; survivors to France, 5.44. To Normandy 6.44; company of 'Der Führer' Regt. commanded by SS-Stubaf. Dickmann murdered 642 men, women and children at Oradour-sur-Glane. Heavy combat area Coutances, St.Lô, Percy, Mortain 6.–8.44; retreated Rousen, St.Vith, German border, 8.–9.44. 9.–12.44 in Schnee-Eifel area. 12.44–1.45, heavy fighting in Ardennes offensive. 2.45 to Hungary, heavy combat: Stühlweissenburg. 4.45 to Austria; combat against Russians near Vienna, and in Czechoslovakia; majority surrendered to US troops, 8.5.45.

MCUs: 6.44: SS-Pz. Regt. 2, SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 3 'Deutschland', SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 4 'Der Führer'

CT: Divisional units, 'Das Reich' (9.43–). Regt. titles 'Deutschland', 'Der Führer' first Gothic, later block; 'Germania' Gothic –11.40; 'Langemarck', briefly, by former 4. SS-Infanterie-Standarte.

3. SS-Panzer-Division 'Totenkopf'

COs: SS-Gruf. Eicke (–2.43), SS-Brigaf. Priess (10.43–6.44), SS-Brigaf. Becker

Raised 11.39. Heavy combat in West, 5.–6.40: Le Cateau, Cambrai, Arras, Dunkirk, Seine and Loire, Lyon, Charente. 4th Coy., Totenkopf-Standarte 2 under SS-Ostuf. Knöchlein murdered approx. 100 PoWs of 2nd Royal Norfolks, Le Paradis, 27.5.40. Occupation duties in France; then invasion Russia. On Lithuanian front, 6.–9.41; Vilna, Luga. Leningrad sector 9.–12.41; defensive fighting in Cholm, Demjansk area 1.–2.42, thereafter only Kampfgruppe Simon –6.42. 4.42, break-through Demjansk-Lovat. 7.–10.42, defensive fighting N.W. of Demjansk. 10.42–2.43, rest and refit in France; 2.–3.43 heavy fighting Kharkov. 4.–7.43, combat Byelgorod area; 7.43, in action at Kursk; –1.44, defensive fighting Isjum, Kharkov, Dnieper, Krivoi-Rog. 1.–4.44, retreated to Rumanian border; defensive battles; moved north to central sector of front, 6.44. 7.44, combat around Grodno; 8.–12.44, heavy fighting in Poland: Warsaw, Narev bridgehead, Modlin. To Hungary 12.44; attempt to relieve Budapest 1.45; retreat to and combat around Stühlweissenberg 2.–3.45; retreat into Austria, combat N.W. of Vienna, 4.–5.45. Surrender to US troops, 9.5.45—less than 1,000 men and six tanks, from an original strength of 19,000. Handed over to Russians.

MCUs: 6.44: SS-Pz. Regt. 3, SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 5 'Thule', SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 6 'Theodor Eicke'

CP: Death's-head—see commentary Plate B2.
CT: Death's-head symbol, –'43; thereafter 'Totenkopf', ordered 9.42–. Regt. titles 'Thule' (–approx.12.43), 'Theodor Eicke' (3.43–); 'Heimwehr Danzig' ('39–'43), 'SS-Heimwehr Danzig' ('43–) by former members in Totenkopf-Infanterie-Regt. 3 and and its subsequent forms, both patterns Gothic.

4. SS-Polizei-Panzer-Grenadier-Division

COs: Eleven in all, of whom the first was SS-Gruf. Pfeffer-Wildenbruch (–11.40), and the last two SS-Brigaf. Schmedes (8.–11.44) and SS-Staf. Harzer (–5.45)

Raised 10.40 from Ordnungspolizei—uniformed 'civilian' police—and Allgemeine-SS reservists, not initially part of W-SS. Poorly trained and equipped; occupation duties in Poland. Some action in West, 5.–6.40. Invaded Russia on northern sector, 6.41; indifferent performance

generally, though fought well on Wolchow River 1.–3.42; taken into W-SS 2.42. Moved to 'Bohemia-Moravia' and Poland on security duty, 5.43; summer '43, to Yugoslavia, anti-partisan service. To Greece on similar duty, 3.44; atrocities in Larissa area. Served in Greece, Yugoslavia, Slovakia throughout '44. To Stettin, Danzig, 1.45–; heavy combat. Some remnants fought in defence of Berlin; survivors retreated west, surrendered to US troops 5.45.

MCUs: 10.39: Polizei-Schutzen Regts. 1, 2, 3; Artillerie-Regt. 300 (Army)
In '43: SS-Gren. Regts. (Pol.-Div.) 1, 2, 3
In '44: SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 7, 8; SS-Pz. Abt. 4

CP: Army/Police patterns –2.42; thereafter runes. *CT:* Police eagle emblem 2.–12.42; thereafter 'SS-Polizei-Division', Gothic and block patterns known.

5. SS-Panzer-Division 'Wiking'

COs: SS-Gruf. Steiner (–5.43), SS-Gruf. Gille (–8.44), SS-Staf. Mühlenkamp (–10.44), SS-Staf. Ullrich

Raised 12.40, originally named 'Germania', from regt. of that name transferred from SS-V-Div., with two new units, 'Westland' (Dutch, Flemings) and 'Nordland' (Scandinavians); '41–'43 a Finnish bn., 'Nordost', also served. Invaded Russia in south, 6.–11.41: Tarnopol, Zhitomir, Tcherkassy, Stalino, Don River. 11.41–spring '42, defensive fighting Don-Mius area. 7.–11.42, advanced into Caucasus: Rostov, Kuban, Terek River. 1.43, fell back on Rostov. 4.–9.43, defensive fighting in Ukraine, counter-attacked between Don and Dnieper, combat around Kharkov. 'Nordland' transferred as cadre new 11. Div., 3.43. Summer '43 Estonian bn. 'Narwa' attached to div.; posted to 20. Div., 7.44. 2.44, 'Wiking' only armoured unit in encircled Tcherkassy Pocket; reduced to half strength in breakout. Re-formed div. saw heavy fighting Vistula front in Poland, 7.–12.44; to Hungary, hard fighting in vain attempts to relieve Budapest, 1.45. Fighting retreat Stühlweissenburg to Fürstenfeld, Czechoslovakia, where surrendered 5.45. Consistently high combat reputation.

MCUs: 6.44: SS-Pz. Regt. 5, SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 9 'Germania', SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 10 'Westland'

SS-Uscha. tank commander of the 'Totenkopf' Division. The vertical closure of the W-SS pattern Panzer tunic is shown clearly here, as is the black *Fliegermütze* cap, and the divisional collar patch. (Bündesarchiv)

CP: Viking ship prow design authorised 3.43, probably never worn; runes in all known photos. *CT:* 'Wiking', block; SS-Gruf. Gille wore personal Gothic pattern. Regt. titles 'Germania' (Gothic), 'Westland' and 'Nordland'. 'Germania' and 'Nordland', shoulder strap 'G' and 'N' monograms briefly worn.

6. SS-Gebirgs-Division 'Nord'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Demelhuber (5.41–4.42), SS-Brigaf. Kleinheisterkamp (–12.43), thereafter several with brief tenure, including SS-Gruf. Debes, SS-Gruf. Brenner

Raised spring '41 from Totenkopf-Standarte 6, 7 & 9. To Finland, and into action on Lapland front 6.41; very poor training resulted in rout at Salla. Withdrawn late summer '41 for training as mountain div.; four bns. Gebirgsjäger, three of Gebirgsartillerie added to survivors of original Kampfgruppe 'Nord'; trained in Austria and Balkans. Returned to Finland 8.42; fought on

northern front –9.44; to Norway, then Denmark. Understrength, designated Kampfgruppe. Some combat Ardennes 12.44; Saar, 1.45; retreated into Ruhr; surrendered to US troops in Bavaria, 4.45.

MCUs: '44: SS-Gebirgsjäger-Regts. 11 'Reinhard Heydrich', 12 'Michael Gaissmair', SS-Pz. Gren. Btl. 506

CP: Initially death's-head, later runes. *CT:* Regt. titles 'Reinhard Heydrich' (6.42–), 'Michael Gaissmair' (6.44–). Ski-bn. 'Norge' wore cuff-title while serving with division. Div. 'Nord' title believed never issued—photo evidence very rare, believed to show former members Allgemeine-SS regional organisation, north Germany. Mountain troops insignia.

7. SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgs-Division 'Prinz Eugen'

COs: SS-Gruf. Artur Phleps (–6.43), SS-Brigaf. Reichsritter von Oberkamp (–2.44), SS-Brigaf. Kumm (–1.45), SS-Oberf. Schmidhuber

Junior NCOs of the 'Wiking' Division, 1943. The SS-Strm. (left) wears field grey uniform with collar open over shirt and tie, and the *Einheitsfeldmütze*—in this case with metal insignia. The Panzer SS-Rttf. (right) displays pink piping around the collar and the patches of his black tunic—the latter particularly unusual, but commonly attributed to this regiment. Both have block-lettered 'Wiking' cuff titles. (Bundesarchiv)

Raised 3.42 from ethnic Germans in Balkans mainly Austrian and Rumanian officers. Trained Serbia summer '42; operational 10.42, though equipment mixed foreign, obsolete stocks. Used entirely against partisans and civilians; bad record atrocities. Operation 'White', 1.–3.43 area Slunj, Bihac, Petrovac. Operation 'Black' 4.–5.43, western Montenegro. Operation 'Snowflurry', 12.43, Rogatica-Goradze areas. Rested Ragusa-Split area, 2.44; then renewed ops against Tito's partisans. To Belgrade 10.44 to cover flank Axis retreat through Yugoslavia from advancing Red Army; heavy losses in combat with Russians. Many desertions reported. Late '44, rump of 21.SS-Div. 'Skanderberg' incorporated into 14th Regt. of div., regt. taking name 'Skanderbeg'. Held open Vardar corridor in Macedonia for retreat Army Group Löhr; heavy fighting against Red Army, Bulgarian troops, partisans. Fought on until 5.45 in Balkans, surrendered to Yugoslavs at Cilli, Slovenia. Many personnel tried, executed for atrocities.

MCUs: 10.43: SS-Frw.-Gebirgsjäger-Regts. 13 'Artur Phleps', 14; also cavalry and light armoured elements.

CP: *Odalrune* in place of *Sigrunen*; some use of *Odalrune* on both patches. *CT:* 'Prinz Eugen' (11.42–); regt. title 'Artur Phleps' (11.44–). Mountain troops insignia.

8. SS-Kavallerie-Division 'Florian Geyer'

COSs: SS-Brigaf. Bittrich (–2.43), SS-Brigaf. Fegelein (–11.43), SS-Brigaf. Rumohr

In 4.41 the two Totenkopf-Reiter-Standarte were renamed SS-Kavallerie-Regimente; 8.41, formed brigade under Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS, used behind front lines in Russia on security duties; suspected of many atrocities. '42, operated partly on anti-partisan duties, partly front-line combat under 9th Army, Army Group Centre. Up-rated to division 6.–8.42; fought under 9th Army, Vjasma-Briansk-Rzhev salient. Operated under 9th Army, 2nd Panzer Army, early '43; to Army Group South 7.43–early '44. Rested Croatia 12.43; anti-partisan fighting early '44; dispersed units fought various areas southern and Balkan fronts, Hungary, Poland. 11.44–2.45, part of Budapest garrison; annihilated in fall of city.

MCUs: 6.43: SS-Kavallerie-Regts. 1, 2, 3. Late

Infantry howitzer crew wearing the 1944 four-pocket camouflage tunic and trousers and 1942 camouflaged field cap. The photo is unidentified, but similarity to others suggests these men may be from 7. SS-Frw. Geb. Div. 'Prinz Eugen'. Two of them wear silver-grey and black sleeve eagles.

'43, SS-Kav. Regt. 4 added; then regts. renumbered 15, 16, 17, 18. SS-Kav. Regt. 17 transferred as cadre of new 22. Div., 12.43.

CT: 'Florian Geyer' (3.43–)

9. SS-Panzer-Division 'Hohenstaufen'

COs: SS-Gruf. Bittrich (–7.44), SS-Oberf. Bock (8.–10.44), SS-Brigaf. Stadler

Activated 31.12.42, France; worked up during 1943, personnel German conscripts mostly aged 18, cadre partly from 'LAH'. 3.44 to Poland; 4.44 into action Tarnopol. 6.44 transferred to France; heavy combat Caen, Avranches, Vire. 8.–9.44 retreat Rouen, Brussels, to Arnhem. Resting in that area when Allied parachute assault took place; effectives fought under Kampfgruppe Harzer. 12.44–1.45 fought in Ardennes, St.Vith; moved to Hungary late 1.45. Heavy fighting 2.–3.45 west of Budapest; fell back to Austria; 5.5.45 surrendered to US troops at Steyr.

MCUs: SS-Pz. Regt. 9, SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 19, 20

CT: 'Hohenstaufen'

10. SS-Panzer-Division 'Frundsberg'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Debes (–11.43), SS-Gruf. von Treuenfeld (–5.45), SS-Brigaf. Harmel

Raised, like 9th Div., early '43 from 18-year-old German conscripts, and originally named 'Karl der Grosse'; worked up in France during '43. Moved to Russian front 3.44; into combat 4.44, Tarnopol. Returned France 6.44, heavy fighting –8.44: Caen, Avranches, Falaise. 8.–9.44, fell back through Belgium to Arnhem area. Effective survivors fought at Arnhem and against British relief force. 11.44 to Aachen; 1.–2.45 fighting on Upper Rhine: Hagenauer Forest, Strasbourg. Moved to Pomerania, fought heavily in areas Stettin, Stargard, Fürstenwalde, 2.–3.45. Surrendered to Red Army at Schönau, 5.45.

MCUs: SS-Pz. Regt. 10, SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 21, 22

CT: 'Frundsberg'

11. SS-Freiwilligen-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Nordland'

COs: SS-Brigaf. von Scholz (5.43–7.44), SS-Brigaf. Ziegler (–4.45), SS-Brigaf. Dr. Krukenberg

Formed summer '43, incorporating various existing foreign volunteer units. Dutch units originally included, later segregated in own 'Nederland'

The field grey SP artillery version of the black Panzer uniform, worn here by a 'Hummel' crewman of 9. SS-Pz. Div. 'Hohenstaufen', winter 1943–44 (Bündesarchiv)

div.; nucleus for 11. Div. was 'Nordland' Regt. from 5. Div. 'Wiking'. New units composed from old as follows:

SS-Grenadier-Regt. 1 'Danmark' = ex-Freikorps Danmark

SS-Gren. Regt. 2 'Norge', I Btl. = ex-Freiwilligen Legion Norwegen

SS-Gren. Regt. 2 'Norge', II & III Btl. = ex-SS-Inf. Regt. 'Nordland'

Numbers filled out with ethnic Germans, mainly from Hungary, Rumania. In action against partisans in northern Croatia 9.43. Transferred to north Russian front 11.43; heavy fighting under III (Germanic) SS Panzer Korps on Baltic coast, summer '44. Remnants made fighting retreat into Kurland; shipped from Libau to Pomerania, 1.45. Heavy combat Danzig, Stettin, Stargard 2.–3.45. Fought to annihilation on Oder front, and Neukölln, Tempelhof, Charlottenburg districts Berlin, 4.–5.45; I Btl. of 'Danmark' and 'Norge' attached to 5. Div. 'Wiking' 4.–5.45.

MCUs: 12.44: SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 23 'Norge', 24 'Danmark'; SS-Pz. Abt. 11 'Hermann von Salza'

CP: 'Sunwheel' rune—circular swastika—see Plate F2. Some use of runes by ethnic Germans probable. Some residual use of Frkps. Danmark variation, miniature Danish flag, possible but unlikely. *CT:* 'Nordland'; regt. titles 'Norge', 'Danmark', 'Hermann von Salza'

Legions-Sturmbannführer Quist, commanding the Frw. Legion Norwegen, displays the Norwegian rampant lion collar patch worn before this unit was absorbed into the 'Nordland' Division. On his left forearm is one of several Norwegian national sleeve patches; this one, believed to be associated with former police personnel, is now thought to have been in gold on grey, but has been described as gold on red. It shows two swords, point up, across the arms of a cross. (Courtesy Hugh Page-Taylor)

12. SS-Panzer-Division 'Hitlerjugend'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Witt (–6.44), SS-Oberf. Meyer (–9.44), SS-Oberf. Krass (11.44–)

Activated 2.43; began working up, Belgium, 7.43; cadre from 'LAH', personnel largely 17-year-old ex-Hitler Youth boys. In N. France 4.–6.44; 6.–7.44, heavy combat Normandy: Caen, Falaise—60 per cent casualties by 9.7.44. Most surivivors trapped in Falaise Pocket, some fought their way out and retreated east to Maas River. After rest and refit, fought in Ardennes 12.44–1.45. Moved to Hungary 1.45; heavy fighting west of Budapest, retreated into Austria, 2.–3.45. Forced march westwards enabled survivors to surrender to US troops near Enns, Austria, 8.5.45: 455 men, from 12.43 strength of 21,300.

MCUs: SS-Pz. Regt. 12, SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 25, 26

CT: 'Hitlerjugend' in Sütterlin script

13. Waffen-Gebirgs-Division der SS 'Handschar' (kroatische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Sauberzweig, SS-Brigaf. Hampel

Raised spring '43 around cadre from 'Prinz Eugen' Div.; recruited (initially volunteers, later conscripts) among Bosnian Moslems, traditional enemies of Christian Serbs from whom majority Tito's partisans drawn. Original title 'BH'—'Bosnia-Hercegovina'. 7.43–2.44 training in France; mutinies. Began anti-partisan operations spring '44, HQ Brcko; many atrocities. Much

Anti-tank gun crew of the 'Hitlerjugend' Division camouflaged in the Normandy *bocage*, June 1944.

desertion in face approaching Red Army; div. disbanded 10.44. German, *Volksdeutsche* cadre formed Regt. Gruppe 13. SS-Gebirgs 'Handschar', Kampfgruppe Hanke. Fought Hungary; south of Budapest, Lake Balaton, Drava. Survivors to British captivity 5.45, Austria.

MCUs: 7.43: Kroatisches SS-Frw. Geb. Jäg. Regts. 1, 2
1.44: SS-Frw. Geb. Jäg. Regts. 27, 28

CP: 'Handschar' scimitar in hand with swastika in angle; see under Plate H2. Mountain troops insignia.

14. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (galizische Nr. 1; ukrainische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Schimana, SS-Brigaf. Freitag

Recruited 4.43 among Ukrainians now behind German lines; German, *Volksdeutsche* cadre. Massive voluntary response, 30,000 accepted. ('Galician' title fictitious, purely due to politico-racial hair-splitting; title changed to 'Ukrainian' 11.44.) Trained Germany; 6.44 to Russia; 7.44 nearly wiped out Brody-Tarnow Pocket. Some survivors reached German lines, to Slovakia for rest and refit. Others hid out in Carpathian Mts. until late '46; fought way through to US Zone Germany winter '46–'47. Rump of division saw little fighting after Brody-Tarnow; kept low profile in Steiermark early '45; handed to 'Ukrainian National Army' 4.45; into British captivity Radstadt 5.45; avoided repatriation to Russia.

MCUs: Waffen-Gren. Regts. der SS 29 (gal. Nr. 1), 30 (gal. Nr. 2), 31 (gal. Nr. 3)

CP: Left-facing rampant lion; see under Plate H3.

15. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (lettische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Hansen, SS-Brigaf. Graf von Pückler-Burghaus, SS-Oberf. Heilmann, SS-Oberf. von Obwurzer, SS-Oberf. Ax, SS-Oberf. Burk

Since 7.41 Latvians formed many internal security units—'Schuma-Bataillone'. Early '43 some Schuma-Btl. formed into Lettische SS Freiwilligen Legion, later Lett. SS-Frw. Brigade with cadre from 2. SS-Inf. Bde.; 11.43 in action on

NCOs of the Latvian 19. Waffen-Grenadier-Div. der SS. showing the large swastika collar insignia. At left one version of the Latvian armshield can be made out: red with a white diagonal. Several types are known, some with 'Latvija' in the top corner or across the top. Again, note metal cap badges. (Courtesy late Col. C. M. Dodkins)

Nevel line. Early '44 expanded to division; fought Narva summer '44; withdrawn for refit late '44; via Kurland to Pomerania, badly mauled again Danzig early '45. Part surrendered to Red Army 5.45, Neu-Ruppin; part to US Army near Elbe, 4.45, after fighting before Berlin. Best fighting record of Baltic formations.

MCUs: 5.44: Waffen-Gren. Regts. der SS 32 (lett. Nr. 3), 33 (lett. Nr. 4), 34 (lett. Nr. 5), Fusilier-Btl. 15

CP: Initially plain black, some use SS runes; later, sunburst around three stars.

16. SS-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Reichsführer-SS'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Simon, SS-Oberf. Baum

Himmler's escort Begleit-Bataillon Kommandostab RF-SS expanded to Sturmbrigade 'Reichsführer-SS' 2.43; on Corsica summer '43. Expanded to div. 10.43, formed Slovenia and Austria. 2.44 SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 35 and Flak Abt. in action Anzio. 3.44 remainder took part in occupation Hungary; 5.44 div. assembled Grossetto, W. Italy. Fought in retreat up coast: Livorna, Pisa, Carrara 8.44. 9.44 anti-partisan operations; several major atrocities. Between Bologna, Forli 1.45 en route Hungary; in action 4.45 Lake Balaton. Dispersed units surrendered to British, US forces at Klagenfurt, Radstadt.

MCUs: SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 35, 36, SS-Pz. Abt. 16

CT: 'Reichsführer-SS'

17. SS-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Götz von Berlichingen'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Ostendorff –6.44, wounded; five temporary COs, Ostendorff returning 11.44–2.45; then SS-Oberf. Bochmann

Raised France late autumn '43 from training/replacement units, drafts other formations, some Balkan *Volksdeutsche*. Into action Normandy 10.6.44; Carentan, Avranches, 6–8.44, then withdrawn Paris, Metz. Rebuilt with survivors SS-Pz. Bde. 49, SS-Pz. Gren. Bde. 51, Merzig, 9.44. In action Saar area 9–11.44, badly mauled. Attacked in S. Alsace as part of Operation *Nordwind*, late 12.44. Forced back into Bavaria via Rimlingen, Schwetzingen, Nürnberg 1–4.44; surrendered to US forces near Achensee 7.5.45 after 11 months' continuous operations in West.

MCUs: summer '44: SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 37, 38, SS-Pz. Abt. 17

CT: 'Götz von Berlichingen'

18. SS-Freiwilligen-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Horst Wessel'

COs: SS-Oberf. Trabandt, SS-Oberf. Bochmann

Authorised 1.44, raised spring '44; cadre from 1. SS-Inf. Bde. (mot); personnel mainly Hungarian *Volksdeutsche*. Original plan for SA volunteers dropped, but title kept. StuG. Btr. from 'Nord' Div. formed nucleus SS-Pz. Abt. 18. Elements Zagreb/Celje, Bačka; others occupation troops Hungary, 3–4.44; training in Hungary 7–10.44; some anti- partisan operations this period. Kampfgruppe Schäfer incl. SS-Pz. Gren. Regt. 40 heavily engaged against Russians 7.44, Lvov; Sanok, 8.44, with attached elements 1. SS-Sturmbrigade 'Frankreich'. Other elements of div. in action against Slovak uprising 8.44; core of div. remained Bačka, then to Slovakia 11.44; near Budapest, heavy fighting, 11–12.44; rejoined there by Kampfgruppe Schäfer. Fought outside Budapest 1.45, then to Slovakia 2.45; heavy fighting Silesia 2–3.45; Czechoslovakia 4.45; largely

destroyed Hirschberg 5.45.

MCUs: 10.44: SS-Pz. Gren. Regts. 39, 40, SS-Pz. Abt. 18

CP: SA monogram made, but use unconfirmed —photographic evidence perhaps dubious. Probably runes. *CT:* 'Horst Wessel'

19. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (lettische Nr. 2)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Schuldt (–3.44), SS-Gruf. Streckenbach

Formed early '44 from Latvian security troops, cadre from 2. SS-Inf. Bde., and other Baltic personnel. Defensive fighting summer '44 Baltic coast; Kurland, '44–'45; surrendered to Red Army, Mitau, 5.45.

MCUs: 10.44: Waffen-Gren. Regts. 42 ('Voldemars Veiss', '45), 43 ('Hinrich Schuldt', '45), 44 (lettische Nr. 6), Fusilier-Btl. 19

CP: Large swastika; double-armed swastika motif also believed worn, variation not precisely explained at time of writing; some use runes also probable.

20. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (estnische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Augsberger (–3.45), SS-Oberf. Maack

Raised Estonia 3.43–4.43 as Estnische Legion; designated 3. Estnische SS-Frw. Bde. while training. In action Nevel, autumn '43. Expanded to division 1.44, incorporating conscripted former

Latvian and Dutch W-SS personnel probably photographed on the Narva front, spring 1944. The Dutch SS-Strm. and SS-Stuf. (left, centre) both wear the old 'Frw. Legion Niederlande' cuff title, and the Dutch armshield on the left forearm; the officer has the 'vertical Wolfsangel' collar patch. The Latvian SS-Ustuf. (right) wears the white-on-red armshield high on his sleeve; it has a scalloped top edge. Between the officers a soldier, probably of the Latvian unit, can be seen to wear the SS-rune collar patch.

Estonian Army personnel, cadre from 1. SS-Inf. Bde. (mot). Fought well at Narva 4.44–8.44; avoided Kurland encirclement, retreated E. Prussia. In action Silesia 3.45, N of Hirschberg 4.45; surrendered to Red Army, Melmick, 5.45.

MCUs: 11.44: SS-Frw. Gren. Regts. 45 'Estland', 46, 47 (formed 7.44 from Estonian Vol. Bns. 658, 659)

CP: Initially runes; later 'E' and sword (see Plate H4); finally armoured arm, sword, 'E'.

21. Waffen-Gebirgs-Division der SS 'Skanderbeg' (albanische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Oberf. Schmidhuber (–8.44), SS-Ostubaf. Graaf (–1.45)

Second Moslem division authorised 4.44, formation began Kossovo summer '44; 6,500 Albanians reported recruited by 9.44. Brief anti-partisan operations; 10.44, mass desertions reduced strength to *c.* 1,300 all ranks. Disbanded; German cadre designated Kampfgruppe Skanderbeg, attached 14. Regt. of 'Prinz Eugen' Division. In action 12.44–1.45 Zwornik, Bjellina, Brcko; believed on Oder 2.45.

MCUs: Nominally, Waffen-Gebirgsjäger Regts. des SS 50, 51

CP: Runes; design with Skanderbeg's goat-head helmet apparently made but not worn to any significant extent. *CT:* 'Skanderbeg'. Mountain troops insignia.

Flemish volunteers wearing the 'Frw. Legion Flandern' cuff title and the black-lion-on-yellow armshield: see Plate F1.

22. SS-Freiwilligen-Kavallerie-Division ('Maria Theresa'?)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Zehender

Raised Hungary spring-summer '44, from two regts. Hungarian *Volksdeutsche* and veteran SS-Kav.-Regt. 17 (former SS-Reiter-Regt. 3) withdrawn from 'Florian Geyer' Division. Only 17. and 52. Regts. complete when sent into action Debreczen; 53. Regt. joined 10.44. In action with 'Florian Geyer', Budapest, 11.44–2.45; destroyed.

MCUs: 10.44: SS-Kav. Regts. 17, 52, 53

CP: 'Karstblum' flower design

23. Waffen-Gebirgs-Division der SS 'Kama' (kroatische Nr. 2)

COs: SS-Staf. Raithel

Recruiting began Bosnia 6.44, but Soviet advance led to abandonment of formation and training 9.44; enlisted ranks dispersed as replacements; German/*Volksdeutsche* officers, NCOs joined Kampfgruppe Hanke of 13. Div. 'Handschar'.

MCUs: Nominally, Waffen-Gebirgsjäger Regts. der SS 55, 56

CP: Illustrated sunburst motif never issued.

23. SS-Freiwilligen-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Nederland'

COs: SS-Brigaf. Wagner

Freiwilligen Legion Niederlande expanded 7.43 into 4. SS-Frw. Pz. Gren. Bde. 'Nederland', 5,500 Dutch volunteers. Autumn '43, anti-partisan operations Croatia. 11.43, regiments named; to Leningrad front 1.44. Summer '44 heavily engaged Narva, 'De Ruiter' Regt. nearly destroyed. 9.44–1.45 retreated Estonia, Lithuania; shipped from Kurland, heavy losses in vessel *Moira*. Early '45 rebuilt, designated division, into action Pomerania; Stargard, Stettin. Moved south, fought before Berlin, almost destroyed Furstenwalde late 4.45; few survivors reached US captivity Magdeburg. High fighting reputation.

MCUs: 5.44: SS-Frw. Pz. Gren. Regts. 48 'General Seyffardt', 49 'De Ruiter'

CP: Frw. Leg. Niederlande wore Wolfsangel rune, both vertical and horizontal, '41–'43. Bde., div. wore SS runes; some overlap probable. *CT:* 'Frw. Legion Niederlande'; Beadle & Hartmann illustrate 'Nederland', and unconfirmed reconstructions 'General Seyffardt', 'De Ruiter'.

24. Waffen-Gebirgs (Karstjäger) Division der SS

COs: SS-Staf. Dr. Ing. Brands, SS-Stubaf. Berschneider, SS-Stubaf. Hahn, SS-Ostubaf. Wagner

Italian armistice 9.43 caught security unit SS-Karstwehr-Bn. at Arnoldstein; posted anti-partisan operations N. Italy, sectors Trieste, Udine, Görz, HQ Gradisca. 7.44 to divisional status under Higher SS & Police Leader Adriatic Coast; recruited S. Tyrol *Volksdeutsche*, HQ Moggio. Inadequate recruiting; organised as brigade 12.44. Early '45 fought partisans and British forces, Julian Alps; some connection with 'Prinz Eugen' Div. Survivors served with army, police stragglers in Kampfgruppe Harmel, 4.45; surrendered to British, partisans, 5.45.

MCUs: SS-Gebirgs (Karstjäger) Regts. 59, 60

25. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS 'Hunyadi' (ungarische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Brigaf. Grassy

Ordered raised 5.44, recruited Neuhammer; forced retreat while still incomplete by Soviet advance summer '44. In action 11.44 Roth/Nürnberg; heavy losses. Part reached US captivity near Attersee 5.5.45.

MCUs: SS-Gren. Regts. 61, 62, 63

CP: Capital 'H' illustrated, unconfirmed.

26. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (ungarische Nr. 2)

COs: SS-Stubaf. Tiemann, SS-Oberf. Maack

Second Hungarian div. ordered raised 3.45 with number 26, names possibly 'Hungaria' or 'Gömbös'. No confirmation of actual progress towards formation; all information from Field Post Office documentation.

MCUs: Waffen-Gren. Regts. 64, 65, 66

SS-Stubaf. Leon Dégrelle, most decorated non-German in the Waffen-SS; his Walloon brigade greatly distinguished itself alongside the 'Wiking' Division during the break-out from the Tcherkassy (Korsun) Pocket in January 1944. He wears shoulder straps of rank with green Waffenfarbe, and standard runes-and-rank collar patches; invisible here is the Army-style Edelweiss patch on the upper right sleeve. Note Knight's Cross at throat, and ribbons of Iron Cross 2nd Class and Winter 1941–42 Medal in buttonhole. Beneath the Close Combat Clasp on the chest are the Iron Cross 1st Class and, clockwise round it, the Rex-Bewegnung decoration of the Belgian Fascist movement; the Wound Badge; and the Infantry Assault Badge. Below the left sleeve eagle is the Walloon national armshield in black, yellow and red surmounted by the word 'Wallonie'.

(NB: SS-Pz. Bde. 49 posted from Denmark to France summer '44 as nucleus for new '26. SS-Pz. Div.', never actually formed, but existed on paper briefly.)

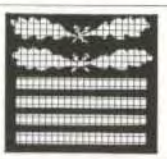
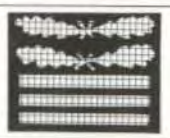
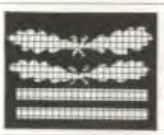
27. SS-Freiwilligen-Grenadier-Division 'Langemarck' (flämische Nr. 1?)

COs: SS-Ostubaf. Schellong

5.43 Frw. Legion Flandern re-organised Milowitz as 6. SS-Frw. Sturmbrigade 'Langemarck'; Flemish volunteers, with some Finnish? In action

continued on page 24

Waffen-SS Rank Insignia

Rank	Collar	Shoulder		Arm Combat dress
Reichsführer-SS (Heinrich Himmler)				
SS-Oberstgruppenführer (Colonel-General) 1942–5			**SS-Obst. Gruf. to SS-Brigaf., shoulder strap cords gold & silver on silver-grey underlay; silver pips. Arm patches gold on black, silver pips.**	
SS-Obergruppenführer (General) Until 1942				
SS-Obergruppenführer (General) 1942–5				
SS-Gruppenführer (Lieutenant-General) Until 1941				
SS-Gruppenführer (Lieutenant-General) 1942–5				
SS-Brigadeführer (Major-General) Until 1941				
SS-Brigadeführer (Major-General) 1942–5				
SS-Oberführer (Brigadier-General) Until 1941			**SS-Oberf., silver cords on Waffenfarbe/black underlay, gold pips –'41, silver pips '42–'45. Arm patches green on black, all ranks from SS-Oberf. down.**	
SS-Oberführer (Brigadier-General) 1942–5				
SS-Standartenführer (Colonel)			**SS-Staf. to SS-Stubaf., shoulder strap cords silver on Waffenfarbe/ black underlay, gold pips –'41, silver '42–'45.**	
SS-Obersturmbannführer (Lieutenant-Colonel)				

Waffen-SS Rank Insignia

Rank	Collar	Shoulder		Arm Combat dress
SS-Sturmbannführer (Major)				
SS-Hauptsturmführer (Captain)			**SS-Hstuf. to SS-Ustuf., shoulder strap cords silver, edged Waffenfarbe, on black. Pips as above.**	
SS-Obersturmführer (1st Lieutenant)				
SS-Untersturmführer (2nd Lieutenant)				
SS-Sturmscharführer (Warrant Officer)			**Non-commissioned ranks, black shoulder straps edged Waffenfarbe, silver braid as appropriate, silver pips.**	
SS-Hauptscharführer (Sergeant-Major)				
SS-Oberscharführer (Colour-Sergeant)				
SS-Scharführer (Sergeant)				
SS-Unterscharführer (Senior-Corporal)				
SS-Rottenführer (Corporal)			**Tunic, left sleeve:**	
SS-Sturmann (Lance-Corporal)				
SS-Oberschütze, SS-Schütze (Sen. & jun. privates)			"SS-Oberschütze"	

Ukraine 12.43; heavy losses Zhitomir early '44. 4.44 rest and refit Czechoslovakia; 7.44 to Narva, heavy losses. 9.44 survivors shipped to Swinemünde, Hammerstein; designated division, incorporating Flemish Luftwaffe, Kriegsmarine, NSKK, Organisation Todt personnel. Fought 1.45 Zachan; 2.45–3.45 Stargard, Altdamm; part on Oder 4.45; Mecklenburg 5.45.

MCUs: 11.44: SS-Frw. Gren. Regts. 66, 67, 68

CP: Frw. Legion Flandern wore runes '41–'43. Brigade, division wore Trifos (see Plate F1); some overlap probable. *CT:* 'Frw. Legion Flandern' & 'Flandern'; 'Langemarck'

28. SS-Freiwilligen-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Wallonien'

COs: SS-Stubaf. Leon Dégrelle

6.43 Wallonische Legion passed from Army to W-SS, expanded to 5. SS-Frw.-Sturmbrigade 'Wallonien'. 11.43 operated Dnieper Bend with 'Wiking' Div.; 1.44 cut off Tcherkassy Pocket and reduced from some 2,000 to 632 men in eventual break-out. Rest and refit Wildflecken; spring '44 to Narva front; heavy losses Reval. To Breslau summer '44; designated division 10.44, incorporating various French, Belgians, some Spanish ('Gruppe Ezquerra'?) 12.44 on Rhine, intended for service Belgium if Ardennes offensive successful. Early '45 to Pomerania; fought Stargard, Stettin, Altdamm 2.45–4.45; strength reduced to *c.* 700 men. Part retreated Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark; part captured by Red Army, Schwerin. Dégrelle flew from Norway to Spain, where he lived openly for many years. Walloon volunteers earned high fighting reputation.

MCUs: 10.44: SS-Frw. Gren. Regts. 69, 70, 71

CP: Runes '43–'45; Cross of Burgundy motif unissued. *CT:* Beadle & Hartmann illustrate 'Wallonien'. Survivors of Army Wallonische Legion wore mountain troops' Edelweiss right sleeve patch and cap badge, Army patterns.

29. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (russische Nr. 1)

Taken into W-SS, on paper, late '43, the 'Kaminski Bde.' consisted of up to 6,500 renegades and cut-throats, largely Ukrainian, led by one Bratislav Kaminski. During 'anti-partisan' security duties in rear areas behind Army Group Centre this gang committed such widespread atrocities that their loyalty was assured, and they were even allowed some captured Soviet armoured vehicles and artillery. Stiffened with various human dregs and lost souls, such as released concentration camp 'trusties', they retreated into Poland with other German forces; and in August '44 were sent into the Wola district of Warsaw during the uprising by the Polish Home Army. Their horrific behaviour led to demands for their withdrawal even by other SS commanders; in one day (5.8.44) they are believed to have murdered some 10,000 Polish civilians. Kaminski was later shot, under disputed circumstances, and the 'division' disbanded, partly to the Vlassov Army and partly to the 30. W-Gren. Div. der SS.

CP: Maltese Cross with crossed swords illustrated but unissued; mixture of German and Russian Liberation Army uniforms, 'POHA' (RONA) insignia.

29. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (italienische Nr. 1)

COs: SS-Staf. Lombard, SS Brigaf. Hansen

Milizia Armata, Italian Fascist security force, taken into W-SS 9.44; details of exact relationship of mentioned units Legione SS Italiana, 1. Italienisches Freiwilligen-Sturmbrigade, and sub-units 'Debica', 'Vendetta' are unknown to present writer. Operations against partisans; some contact Allied forces. Vacant divisional number awarded to Sturmbrigade 4.45. Descriptions suggest sub-units operated widely dispersed.

CP: Runes; fasces motif ordered 4.45, possibly worn. Insignia backing red, later possibly black. Officers' ranking patches both sides collar. Sleeve and cap eagles had fasces replacing wreathed swastika. All insignia applied to Italian uniforms.

30. Waffen-Grenadier Division des SS (russische Nr. 2) ('weissruthenische Nr. 1'?)

COs: SS-Ostubaf. Siegling

Formed 7.44 under police command as Schuma-Bde. Siegling, from renegade Russian security units: 1. Regt. from Schuma-Btl. 57, 60, 61, & Polizei-Gebiets-Kommandantur Minsk; 2. Regt.

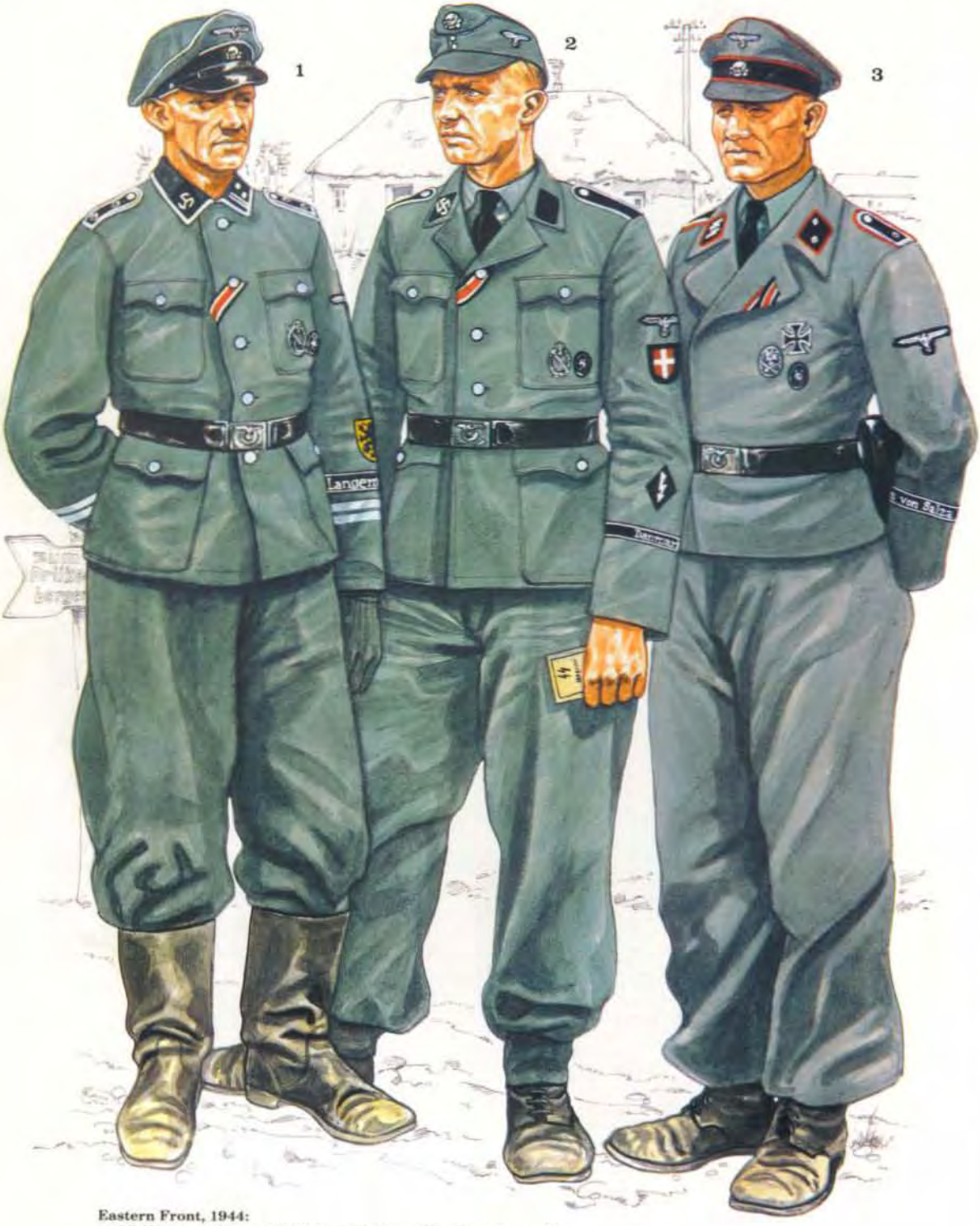
1. SS-Stubaf., SS-Verfügungstruppe; service dress, 1939
2. SS-Brigaf. und Gen. Maj. der W-SS, late 1940
3. SS-Hstuf., artillery, SS-V-Div.; walking-out dress, summer 1940

France, 1940:
1. SS-Uscha., Aufkl.Abt. 'LAH'
2. Junior officer, SS-Totenkopf-Div.
3. SS-Rttf., SS-VT-Standarte 2 'Germania', SS-V-Div.

Russia, summer, 1941-43:
1. SS-Reiter, SS-Kavallerie-Div.
2. SS-Schütze, infantry
3. SS-Uscha., infantry

Russia, winter, 1941-45:
1. SS-Mann, infantry, SS-Div.'Reich', 1941-42
2. SS-Schütze, infantry, Kharkov, 1943
3. SS-Schütze, infantry, 1944-45

Southern Europe, 1943-44:
1. SS-Ostuf., 7.SS-Frw-Geb-Div. 'Prinz Eugen'; Balkans, 1944
2. SS-Scha., SS-Fallschirmjäger-Btl. 500; Balkans, 1944
3. SS-Strm., Sturmbrigade 'Reichsführer-SS'; Corsica, 1943



Eastern Front, 1944:
1. SS-Hscha., infantry, 27.SS-Frw-Pz-Gren-Div. 'Langemarck'
2. Signaller, SS-Pz-Gren-Regt. 24 'Danmark', 11.SS-Frw-Pz-Gren-Div. 'Nordland'
3. SS-Oscha., SS-Pz-Abt. (StuG) 11 'Hermann von Salza'

Normandy, 1944:
1. SS-Uscha., 1/sSS-Pz-Abt. 501
2. SS-Staf. Kurt Meyer, 12.SS-Pz-Div. 'Hitlerjugend'
3. SS infantry NCO, 12.SS-Pz-Div. 'Hitlerjugend'
4. SS-Schütze, infantry, 12.SS-Pz-Div. 'Hitlerjugend'

Insignia:
1. Leutnant. SS-Polizei-Division, 1942
2. SS-Hscha., Feldgendarmerie, 13.W-Geb-Div. der SS 'Handschar', 1944
3. W-Grenadier, 14.W-Gren-Div. der SS, 1944
4. W-Stubaf., 20.W-Gren-Div. der SS, 1944
5. SS-Strm., 'Britisches Freikorps', 1944–45

from Schuma-Btl. 62, 63, 64, & PGK Glebokie-Lida; 3. Regt. from PGKs Slusk, Baranowitschi & Wileika; 4. Regt. from PGK Slonim & Polizeiführer Pripyet; cavalry & artillery from Schuma-Btl. 68 & 56.

Became W-SS Div., 8.44. To France; anti-Maquis ops. Belfort/Mühlhausen, and some contact Allied forces. To Germany, 11.44; survivors to Vlassov Army, officers and NCOs to 25. & 38. W-SS Divs.

MCUs: 10.44: Waffen-Gren. Regts. der SS 75, 76, 77

CP: Possibly, Russian Orthodox cross, horizontally.

31. SS-Freiwilligen-Grenadier-Division

COs: SS-Brigaf. Gustav Lombard

Formed Hungary, Slovakia, 10.44 from mixed foreign and *Volksdeutsche*; some officers and NCOs from former 23. Waffen-Gebirgs-Div. der SS 'Kama'. Far below strength; fought Red Army in retreat, and probably destroyed Königgratz, 5.45. One unconfirmed source gives honour-title 'Böhmen-Mähren' or 'B-M'.

32. SS-Freiwilligen-Grenadier-Division '30. Januar'

COs: SS-Staf. Mühlenkamp, SS-Staf. Richter, SS-Oberf. Ax, SS-Staf. Kempin

Formed 1.45 in Kurmark (orig. 'Kampfgruppe Kurmark') from mixed stragglers, and staff and pupils of various SS training schools. Heavy losses Oder front, 2.45–3.45; elements fought south of Berlin. Some reached Allied captivity Tangermunde, 5.45.

MCUs: SS-Frw. Gren. Regts. 86, 87, 88

33. Waffen-Kavallerie-Division der SS (ungarische Nr. 3)

No confirmed details; probably hastily assembled, largely Hungarian cavalry force, far below strength, raised Hungary 1944–45 and destroyed Budapest 2.45.

33. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS 'Charlemagne' (französische Nr. 1)

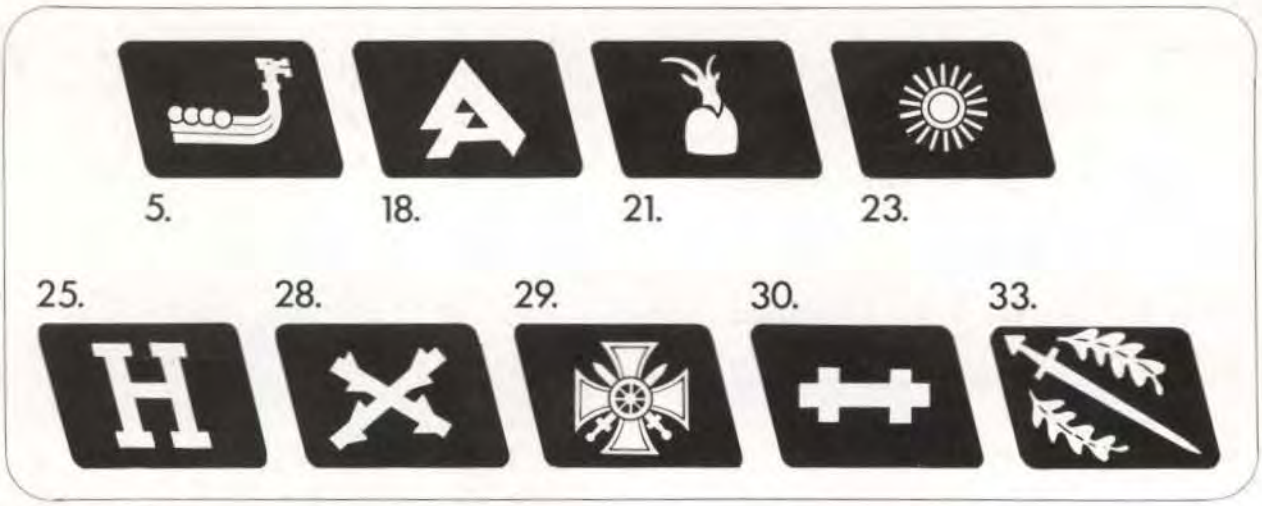
COs: Waffen-Oberf. Puaud (–2.45), SS-Brigaf. Dr. Krukenberg (–4.45), SS-Staf. Zimmermann

French Volunteer Legion, with fine record under Army command, passed to W-SS 8.43 as Französisches SS-Frw. Gren. Regt. Withdrawn 7.44 to Bohemia-Moravia after heavy loss, became Französisches Frw. Sturmbrigade 'Charlemagne'. Heavy fighting 8.44, Sanok/Mielec sector Carpathian front. Rebuilt at Wildflecken, autumn '44; briefly to West, then to Pomerania. Early '45, redesignated as division, in action Neustettin. Details of fate unconfirmed; some survivors reached US captivity via Moosburg area. French unit destroyed Berlin 4.45–5.45 now known not to be part of this formation.

MCUs: 2.45: Waffen-Gren.Regts. 57, 58

CP: Runes; illustrated sword & laurels motif believed unissued. *CT:* Beadle & Hartmann

W-SS unit collar patches known to have been made, issued, and worn at least to some extent; note that others illustrated elsewhere in this book, in photos or colour plates, are not duplicated here. See numbered divisional notes for further comment.



These divisional collar patches have been illustrated, but in all cases it is not believed that they were actually made, or if made, were worn to any significant extent. See numbered divisional history notes.

illustrate unconfirmed reconstruction 'Charlemagne', also mentioned by survivors.

34. SS-Grenadier-Division 'Landstorm Nederland'

COs: SS-Staf. Knapp, SS-Staf. Kohlroser (5.–11.44)

Formed spring '43 as Landwacht Niederlande, security unit of Dutch volunteers under German police officers. To W-SS 9.44; operations Arnhem; anti-partisan operations Nord-Brabant. To Gelderland 2.45, then to Rhein-Waal; surrendered 5.45. Never approached div. strength.

MCUs: 10.44: SS-Frw. Gren. Regts. 83, 84; SS-Panzerjäger Abt. Nordwest; SS-Flak Btr. Clingendaal

CP: Runes, also flaming grenade motif in metal; latter replaced cap death's-head in some cases. *CT:* Beadle & Hartmann illustrate 'Landstorm Nederland'.

35. SS-Polizei-Grenadier-Division

COs: SS-Oberf. Wirth, SS-Staf. Pipkorn

Created 2.45 from personnel Dresden Police School, with company from SS-Junkerschule Braunschweig. In action Neisse front 4.45; surrendered Halbe 5.45.

MCUs: Pol. Regts. 29, 30, 14, subsequently renumbered 1, 2, and 3, and finally as Pol. Gren. Regts. 89, 90, 91

36. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS

COs: SS-Oberf. Dr. Oskar Dirlewanger (–2.45), SS-Brigaf. Schmedes

This unit became so notorious that it deserves some space. Dirlewanger, a former Army comrade of W-SS Chief of Staff Gottlob Berger, was jailed for sex crimes in '35; when released he was given a Condor Legion posting at Berger's intercession. In 1940 he was allowed to form a small battalion of German convicts—'poachers'—which operated as a Totenkopf penal unit in Poland in '41, both labouring and guarding labour gangs. In '42–'44, steadily increased first to brigade and finally to divisional status, it operated as a 'security' unit in Russia, taking personnel from German prisons and concentration camps, SS military prisons, and other human cess-pits. Its reputation for atrocity became scandalous, but complaints were ignored and Dirlewanger, personally implicated in horrific crimes, was always protected. Himmler was well aware of his record, yet in 8.43 he was awarded the German Cross in Gold. In summer '44 Dirlewanger led his 4,000 butchers, rapists and looters into action against the Warsaw Uprising, and quickly committed such unspeakable crimes that both Army and SS commanders successfully demanded the unit's withdrawal; yet in 10.44 Dirlewanger was awarded the Knight's Cross. The unit served in Slovakia, Hungary, and on the Oder; Dirlewanger was wounded in 2.45, and is now known to have died mysteriously in detention in 6.45 and to be buried at Althaus. His 'division' was surrounded and—reportedly—massacred by the Red Army S.E. of Berlin on

29.4.45.
CP: Crossed rifles over a horizontal stick-grenade.

37. SS-Freiwilligen-Kavallerie-Division 'Lützow'

COs: SS-Staf. Gesele

Formed Pressburg 2.45–3.45 from survivors of 8. & 22. SS-Kav.-Divs. and other stragglers incl. Hungarians of Honved Div.; heavily engaged N of Vienna 3.45. Surrendered to US Army in Austria.

MCUs: SS-Kavallerie-Regts. 92, 93

38. SS-Grenadier-Division 'Nibelungen'

COs: SS-Ostubaf. Schulze, SS-Gruf. Ritter von Oberkamp, SS-Gruf. Heinz Lammerding, SS-Staf. Stange

Formed 27.3.45 from personnel of SS-Junkerschule Bad Tölz, Himmler's bodyguard battalion, 8,000 17-year-olds, and stragglers from 30. W-Gren. Div. der SS; list of commanders probably purely notional. Hitler personally ordered formation, for use in West, originally under title 'Junkerschule'. Elements fought briefly Upper Bavaria, surrendered Alpen-Donau early 5.45. No known unit titles; thought to have had 2,700 men in seven battalions, early 4.45.

The Plates

A1: SS-Sturmbannführer, SS-Verfügungstruppe; service dress, 1939

The cap—*Dienstmütze, Schirmmütze*—was worn by officers from 1937 for service and walking-out dress, at this date with white piping at crown seam and band edges—see under Plate A3 for *Waffenfarbe* details. The distinctive SS eagle and death's-head in white metal were the cap insignia of all ranks and branches of the SS throughout the war. Officers wore the band in black velvet, and silver chincords.

The officer's *Rock* replaced the 1935 earth-grey tunic in 1937, being of similar cut to the latter and to the black tunic but in field grey, with a stepped open collar piped silver, slash skirt pockets and single rear vent. Confused orders led to its wear both closed at the throat and open over a light brown shirt and black tie. In use as out-of-combat uniform throughout the war, it sometimes had the unpiped dark green Army-style collar while retaining the tell-tale slash pockets. The breeches were sometimes in a less green shade termed 'new-grey'. Lightweight gabardine or 'moleskin' versions of tunic and breeches, in field grey, were popular summer wear. Neither type of breeches was piped at the seam; the 'new-grey' type were sometimes reinforced with grey leather on the inside leg for field use.

Ranking is worn at shoulder and collar. Silver cord shoulder straps, of the standard interwoven design for German field-rank officers, have white underlay at this date. The right collar patch bears the SS service insignia, the *Sigrunen* or SS-runes; the left, the four 'pips' of major's rank. Collar insignia are in silver wire embroidery and metal on black backgrounds, and all officers' patches had silver cord edging. Unlike other armed services the SS wore their special shape of national eagle badge on the left arm instead of the right breast, in silver on black. Black and silver cuff titles of department or formation were sewn, when appropriate, to the cuff turn-back of officers' left sleeves, and in a similar position on enlisted ranks' sleeves; we illustrate the 1939 Gothic-lettered 'SS-Inspektion' of the Inspectorate of SS-Verfügungstruppe. This NSDAP member wears his 'party button' as a tie-pin; on the breast are the bronze SA Sports/Military and German Sports badges. Ribbons for the Austrian Anschluss, the entry into Czechoslovakia and eight years' SS service are worn above them. The belt buckle is the distinctive SS officers' type; the shoulder belt of the 'Sam Browne' was laid aside after January 1941.

Note that since officers purchased their own uniforms a wide variety of shades of field grey are seen in wartime photos, from strongly green to pale dove grey, or even pale grey with a slight blue cast.

A2: SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Waffen-SS, late 1940

Late in 1940 the integration of the W-SS within the armed forces was marked by adoption of dual ranking for W-SS generals, the equivalent Army

rank appearing as a suffix to the W-SS rank.

Generals' caps had silver metallic piping. The open coat collar displays the Knight's Cross, its ribbon passing under the dark green stand-and-fall collar of an Army-style field blouse. Himmler tried to outlaw the Army-style tunic, but without success; some were made with slash skirt pockets instead of Army patch pockets. Initially all field grey, the officers' greatcoat often appeared with green Army-style collar; for generals the lapels were faced silver-grey. Officers often wore (unofficial) silver collar piping. Collar patches were initially regulation on the coat, but gradually became less common; here they are those of this rank prior to 1942 (see table elsewhere in book), ranks from SS-Staf. wearing ranking on both sides. Shoulder straps of rank in mixed gold and silver cord are worn on silver-grey underlay, peculiar to generals and the staff of the Reichsführer-SS. Where appropriate, cuff titles were worn on the coat. Privately purchased leather coats displayed shoulder straps only. The right sleeve chevron has no rank significance, identifying former Wehrmacht or Police personnel.

A3: SS-Hauptsturmführer of artillery, SS-Verfügungs-division; summer 1940

A captain, decorated for service in Poland or the West with SS-Artillerie-Standarte SS-VT, wearing walking-out dress: unbelted tunic with dress dagger suspended from an internal fixture, and straight, piped trousers worn over shoes. The Army-style field blouse has the closed collar of dark green 'badge cloth', and patch skirt pockets. The off-duty trousers in 'new-grey' have *Waffenfarbe* seam piping—we have shown cap, shoulder straps, and trousers all piped in red artillery *Waffenfarbe*, which raises a vexed question.

Prior to December 1939, regulations specified white piping for all relevant parts of the W-SS officers' uniform, irrespective of branch of service. In that month shoulder straps with double underlay were ordered: branch *Waffenfarbe* on black. Cap and trouser piping remained white. May 1940 saw an order changing cap piping to *Waffenfarbe*, and trouser piping to grey. In November 1940 cap and trousers reverted to white piping, the shoulder strap double underlay being retained as before. Several months' grace for the wearing out of superseded items were given in each case. In practice, photos show caps piped white and caps piped in different shades of *Waffenfarbe* in continued use, often side by side in the same unit, throughout the war. Trousers are far less evident in photos, but we may presume a similar degree of confusion.

The attractive 'Holbein'-shaped dagger had a black grip and scabbard and silver fittings including SS-runes and an SS eagle on the grip; worn suspended beneath the tunic, or beneath the pocket flap but over the tunic, on an ornate chain, it had the same silver fist-strap and knot as the Army officer's dress dagger.

As a member of the divisional artillery this officer does not wear one of the regimental cuff titles sported by infantry of this division; the divisional title 'Das Reich' did not appear until 1942. Decorations include the General Assault Badge, indicating front line combat over a number of days in a branch other than infantry or armour; the pin-back Iron Cross 1st Class; and the ribbons of the 2nd Class, and the four years' SS service decoration.

SS-Ustuf. of the 'Totenkopf' Division in the West, 1940. He carries an obsolete MP. 28. The divisional and rank collar patches are displayed on the silver-piped grey collar of a pre-war *Rock*: cf. Plates A1, B2.

B1: SS-Unterscharführer, Aufklärungs-Abteilung 'LAH'; France, June 1940

The Army's black armoured vehicle crew uniform was worn from about 1938 in the armoured car company of the 'LAH' reconnaissance element.

In 1940–42 a W-SS version gradually superseded it, although supply difficulties led to some Army issue late in the war. The SS type had a smaller collar and lapels, a vertical rather than a slanted front closure, and no rear central seam. Normal rune and rank patches were worn on the collar; in this unit a few photos of 1939–40 show the patches edged in the rose-pink *Waffenfarbe* piping of armoured troops. The Army's pink piping on the collar itself was rarely seen in the W-SS, and the piping of the patches was short-lived. Officers wore silver-piped collars and patches. There are isolated examples of 'LAH' NCOs wearing 9mm silver *Tresse* braid on the black jacket collar. *Tresse* and *Waffenfarbe* were worn as appropriate on the black shoulder straps.

The Army's two-piece padded head protector/beret was worn by W-SS units in 1939–40, with a silver-grey eagle and death's-head badge woven in a slightly different shape to similar insignia on other uniform items. The headgear was generally replaced by a black field cap before the Russian campaign; some photos show officers wearing a silver-piped black field cap in Poland, and others, a mixture of field grey field caps and black berets in the Balkans in April 1941. There was a black version of the cap illustrated in Plate B3.

All ranks and units of the 'LAH' wore an 'Adolf Hitler' cuff title in Sütterlin script. In action, unit shoulder strap insignia were often covered or removed for security; these were an 'LAH' monogram in yellow metal, silver metal, and silver-grey embroidery for officers, NCOs and enlisted men respectively. From 1940 the latter were replaced by removable black slip-over loops bearing the monogram, for use with plain shoulder straps.

B2: Junior officer, SS-Totenkopf-Division; France, spring 1940

A popular field alternative to the field cap—*Schiffchen*, see B3—and *Schirmmütze* was the 'old style field cap' authorised for officers and for NCOs from Unterscharführer up. Small and unstiffened, it was worn without cords or strap, the peak being either of semi-stiff leather or of stiffened field grey cloth. If, as has been suggested, the variation distinguished officers from NCOs,

Men of the 'Germania' Regt. take a brief rest: France, 1940. Note civilian scarves, camouflage smocks, gas-cape bag, and pre-war grey-collared tunic with regimental 'runes-2' patch.

then it was widely ignored in practice. Metal badges, and cloth badges from other headgear, were both used; white or *Waffenfarbe* piping was worn indiscriminately. Officers seem sometimes to have converted service caps for field use by removing the cords and stiffening.

The famous SS 'tiger jacket' camouflage smock, copied during and since the war by most of the world's armies, was used in small quantities in Poland, along with the matching helmet cover. Most W-SS combat troops wore them in the West in 1940. This officer has tucked the 'frills' at the wrist up under the cuff elastic. Of waterproof cotton duck, the smock and cover were reversible, with different shades printed on the two sides; one was usually predominantly green for spring/summer use, and the other mainly brown for autumn/winter. Details of pattern varied widely and without particular significance, but a combination of leaf-shapes and spots was characteristic.

In combat some officers wore service dress breeches, others field grey gabardine or 'moleskin' versions, and others still, the enlisted man's trousers and marching boots. The Wehrmacht officers' field service belt was used alongside the

Detail of the camouflage smock: note elasticated waist and cuffs, the 'frills' of which were often tucked out of sight inside; drawstring fastening down chest; and vertical access slits for pockets.

special W-SS belt. This officer wears the holstered Luger P. 08 pistol, mapcase, binoculars, and slung gasmask canister and gas cape bag. His smock reveals the field blouse collar with two silver-piped Totenkopf collar patches. The smock thus covers the only rank insignia—the shoulder straps—and explains Himmler's May 1940 order that doubled patches were to be replaced by the normal symbol/ranking combination. The double patches stem from pre-war Totenkopfverbände regulations; their use by some officers and enlisted men was observed at least until late 1941.

B3: SS-Rottenführer, SS-VT-Standarte 2 'Germania', SS-Verfügungsdivision; France, spring 1940

The enlisted man's field grey field blouse and matching trousers replaced similar earth-grey garments from 1937, differing from Army equivalents mainly in having slash skirt pockets and a grey collar. Initially collar, patches, and some shoulder straps were piped in mixed black/silver cord; this generally disappeared before spring 1940 and was officially discontinued in August 1940. The 1937 field grey field cap bore a frontal silver button (often overpainted grey-green) with an embossed death's-head, and on the left a white SS eagle on a black cloth triangle. In 1939 Army-style inverted 'V' piping in *Waffenfarbe* was added to the front.

(Officers were ordered to acquire a new field cap in December 1939; field grey, of Luftwaffe cut, it had a smooth top line to the turn-up, piped in silver. Silver-on-black woven insignia were worn, the SS eagle on the front of the crown and the death's-head on the front of the turn-up. The *Waffenfarbe* 'V' was sometimes worn. An order of November 1940 reserving silver cap piping for generals and specifying a return to white piping for other officers was generally ignored. Supply shortages led to frequent use of Army officers' field caps with SS insignia.)

Conventional left sleeve insignia are worn; the SS eagle, rank chevrons, and the 'Germania' regimental cuff title. All junior enlisted ranks wore black shoulder straps piped in *Waffenfarbe*—here, infantry white. This regiment's 'runes-2' collar patch has been removed for security reasons, and the ranking patch too; although the numbered patch was officially discarded by an order of May 1940, some of the photos in this book show its occasional use thereafter. The regimental shoulder strap cypher, 'G', was applied—and concealed—in the same way as the 'LAH' cypher described under B1 above.

Section leader's field equipment comprises binoculars and an SMG—in this case, as frequently in early W-SS units, an obsolescent pattern, the MP.28 II—in addition to the infantryman's standard belt, spade, bayonet, bread bag, canteen, and slung gasmask canister with attached cape bag. The pouch for MP.28 magazines is slung on his left, the matt-painted helmet with SS-rune decal on his right, roughly camouflaged with mud. The left side decal, a black swastika on a white disc on a red shield, was officially abandoned in March 1940, and the runes decal in November 1943, but both survived longer in practice. Noteworthy are the early webbing shoulder braces, characteristic of the W-SS of this period.

C1 : SS-Reiter, SS-Kavallerie-Division ; Russia, 1942–43

The mounted formation which later became the 'Florian Geyer' Division, operating mainly on 'anti-partisan' duty in Russia. The smock, worn without a tunic in hot weather, has the skirt tucked inside the elasticated waist—a typical soldier's habit. The camouflage cap, shaped like the mountain troops' *Bergmütze*, was ordered in June 1942; it had spring colours on the outside and autumn colours inside, and was initially worn without badges. Field grey riding breeches had leather reinforcement on the inside leg; with use this became noticeably darker than the cloth. The riding boots had strapped spurs. The personal equipment was the simple rifleman's harness, with the Mauser 98k slung diagonally across the back, and the gasmask and messtins attached to the saddle.

C2 : SS-Schütze, Russia, 1941–42

Back view of the typical assault harness, although there were as many detail variations as there were soldiers. The pack was left with the unit transport, and the infantryman fought in a simple rig which carried his immediate necessities. A webbing A-frame clipped to the D-rings behind each shoulder brace, and supported by means of straps and buckles a rolled camouflage shelter-quarter, the messtins, a bag of tent pegs, and sometimes an 'iron ration' bag. The gasmask was slung separately. At right are the bread bag containing small personal kit, rations, field cap, etc., and the canteen, which was usually clipped to an upper D-ring of the bag.

C3 : SS-Unterscharführer of infantry ; Russia, 1941–42

Archetypal SS infantry junior leader of the first half of the war. The smock, in a leaf pattern occasionally seen in place of the usual spotted design, exposes NCO's silver *Tresse* and rune-and-rank patches on the green collar of an Army field blouse; this generally replaced the grey-collared W-SS tunic as the organisation expanded to several divisions. Field grey trousers, marching boots, the M1935 steel helmet with camouflage cover fixed by spring hooks, and a field cap (like that worn by Plate E2) tucked into pocket or bread bag, complete the uniform. In the German

Army-style field blouse with dark green collar, and the attached insignia of an SS-Rttf. of the 'Das Reich' Division. Note also detail of standard rifleman's equipment.

forces many sub-units were commanded by NCOs, and this may well be a platoon commander. He is strung about with mapcase and binoculars as well as standard field harness—see C2—and the triple magazine pouches for his MP.40. Stick grenades are thrust under these for quick access, and a fighting knife is clipped into the top of his boot. Goggles of various Wehrmacht patterns were often worn by individuals as protection against dust and rain.

D1 : SS-Mann, infantry, SS-Division 'Reich' ; Russia, winter 1941–42

No special protective clothing was available in the first winter in Russia, and the W-SS suffered as badly as any other troops despite Himmler's speedy confiscation of civilian furs in the ghettoes. Old sheets were used to make snow camouflage smocks, hooded coats, or suits of jacket and trousers in various units; they gave no warmth, only camouflage, and were worn over the normal uniform. Photos show men of this division (from May 1942, 'Das Reich') in this combination of

Interesting photo of W-SS infantry in Russia wearing the smock over the greatcoat in cold weather. The use of collar patches on the greatcoat (left) declined sharply as the war progressed.

issue greatcoat and white smock. Later in the war the green coat collar gave way to field grey, and the use of collar patches and cuff titles on coats declined, all for economic reasons. Standard rifleman's equipment is carried; the gasmask has been discarded, and the spade is thrust into the belt for easy access, either for digging-in or for use as a hand-to-hand weapon.

D2: SS-Schütze; Kharkov, early 1943
An infantry squad MG.42 crewman in one of Paul Hausser's crack divisions, he wears the excellent winter clothing rapidly developed specifically for the W-SS in time for winter 1942–43. The very bulky outline of the padded parka, with its large fur-lined hood, is faithfully reproduced. The matching overtrousers, with gaiter sections and instep straps to protect the laced part of the new ankle boots just appearing at the front, were not padded. Both items were made in a rather neutral grey, lined with fur or fleece of all kinds and colours. The helmet is worn over a grey wool toque; the mittens have separate thumbs and trigger-fingers. For operations in heavy snow a thin white hooded smock and overtrousers were worn over this outfit, being much easier to keep clean than the padded gabardine clothing. A wide variety of fur- and fleece-lined caps was worn with this outfit, all of basically Russian pattern with ear and front flaps. Eagle and/or death's-head badges were often applied to the front flap. As an MG gunner this private wears the MG.42 tool pouch on the right of his belt, and his personal P.38 sidearm on the left.

D3: SS-Schütze; Eastern Front, winter 1944–45
By winter 1943–44 the W-SS version of the reversible, padded winter combat uniform was on issue; white on one side and in SS autumn camouflage on the other, it was made up of a

hooded jacket, rather short overtrousers, mittens, and a separate hood or balaclava (not illustrated here). The overtrousers were gathered by drawstrings at the calf to felt and leather winter boots; the latter, available since 1942, were made in a number of slightly differing patterns. When available, quilted undergarments were worn under this outfit, as well as the normal uniform clothing.

The *Einheitsfeldmütze Modell 1943* began replacing the *Schiffchen* field cap (Plate E2) in 1943 as the normal headgear of enlisted ranks in the field. Based on the successful *Bergmütze* and tropical field caps, it had a slightly longer peak than the former. At first the flap fastened at the front with two buttons, but single-button types appeared in 1944. Normally a woven death's-head was worn on the front of the crown and an eagle on the left side of the flap, but there were many variations. Officers' versions had silver crown-piping.

The equipment reflects the introduction of new weapons and the shortage of strategic materials. Leather shoulder braces have been replaced once more by webbing; and poor-quality synthetic materials of various shades and details of finish were used for the two triple magazine pouch sets—each with a small accessory pocket—for the MP.43/MP.44/StG.44 assault rifle series.

E1: SS-Obersturmführer, 7. SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgs-Division 'Prinz Eugen'; Balkans, spring 1944

Before the introduction of the M1943 field cap to all branches, the sole mark of the mountain troops was their *Bergmütze*. This was of Army pattern; officers frequently wore the same cap as their men, but could buy superior versions with silver-piped crown seams and, unusually, silver piping in the front 'scoop' of the flap. The standard badges were normally worn as illustrated, but variations included use of metal death's-heads, and the cramming of both badges on the front. In October 1943 the introduction of special mountain troops' insignia in the form of Edelweiss cap and right sleeve badges—in silver-grey on black, with yellow stamens—complicated this picture further. The Edelweiss was worn on the left side of the flap at a slant; the eagle was sometimes moved to the front, sometimes retained ahead of the Edelweiss. Some use of officially forbidden Army mountain badges was observed.

This first lieutenant wears a standard Army field blouse and W-SS ranking, with the light green of mountain troops visible on the shoulder straps. The right collar patch is of the divisional 'Odalrune' pattern. Members of the SS proper—i.e. officers and men of *Reichsdeutsche* W-SS units or other branches of the SS drafted into 'Prinz Eugen' as cadre—wore the *Sigrunen* in silver on green on the left breast. Note also the Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon worn in the buttonhole, the Infantry Assault Badge, and the divisional cuff title. Special mountain trousers, full-cut and reinforced, are held inside metal-cleated climbing boots by an instep strap and drawstrings. Short puttees or canvas webbing 'Styrian' gaiters were often observed.

The Odalrune collar patch peculiar to the 'Prinz Eugen' Division is shown here; note also heavy metal cleating on soles of mountain boots.

E2: SS-Scharführer, SS-Fallschirmjäger-Bataillon 500; Balkans, spring 1944

On 25 May 1944 two companies of SS-Hstuf. Rybka's parachute penal battalion dropped over Tito's HQ at Drvar, and the other two landed by glider; they narrowly missed cornering the great guerilla leader. Little is known about this unit, composed of disgraced former officers and men of other W-SS units. Most photos show the Luftwaffe jump-smock in splinter-pattern camouflage, field grey trousers, standard ankle boots and webbing anklets, and parachute helmets with or without string netting; and the *Schiffchen* field cap, which replaced that worn in B3 from November 1940.

From February 1944 to January 1945 'Prinz Eugen' was commanded by Otto Kumm, seen here as an SS-Staf. after winning the Oakleaves to his Knight's Cross as commander of the 'Der Führer' Regt., 'Das Reich' Div., in April 1943. The colonel's collar patches and the officer's *Schirmmütze* are clearly shown. Kumm went on to serve as the last commander of 'LAH'.

The smock was usually worn without national insignia, but one or two photos definitely show the Luftwaffe right breast eagle. (A report of the finding in the USA of smocks in W-SS camouflage material but of Fallschirmjäger cut, with SS sleeve eagles on the right breast, must be regarded with suspicion.) One photo shows an NCO of this unit wearing a tunic with a cuff title, but its lettering is not visible; Beadle and Hartmann illustrate a supposedly original title in SS style, block-lettered 'Fallschirmjäger', but I do not know of any wartime photos confirming its authenticity. Some photos suggest the use by this unit of the green-on-black sleeve ranking system authorised for use on combat clothing without shoulder straps in February 1943.

E3: SS-Sturmmann, Sturmbrigade 'Reichsführer-SS'; Corsica, summer 1943

Photos show use of a pale sandy-yellow tropical uniform by W-SS units in the Mediterranean, Balkan and south Russian theatres, with or without shirts. Two patterns of field blouse were worn: one was cut similar to the Army's olive blouse, and the other—illustrated—was the Italian 'sahariana'. All ranks wore both types indiscriminately, with long straight trousers either gathered by web anklets or bloused directly into ankle boots; Mollo publishes a photo of two 'Wiking' Division soldiers in Army-cut blouses and trousers gathered into mountain boots. The matching *Schiffchen* and M1943 field caps appear identical to Luftwaffe tropical issue. Cap badges and sleeve eagles were made in light copper brown on black, but collar patches and shoulder straps were of European issue. Mollo states that NCOs' collar *Tresse* was also in light copper brown, and also the braid on rank chevrons; we choose here to follow a photo of European issue chevrons on this uniform. A tropical sun helmet is also seen in photos, and a surviving example has metal escutcheons pinned to the sides following the design of W-SS helmet decals.

F1: SS-Hauptscharführer, infantry, 27. SS-Freiwilligen-Panzer-Grenadier-Division 'Langemarck'; Eastern Front, 1944

The 'Spiess'—senior NCO within a unit—wore two silver braid cuff bands, and unit cuff titles,

if any, were placed above these. The Army field blouse also displays the division's 'Trifos' collar patch rune, and the Flemish volunteers' armshield—a black lion on a yellow ground; the ribbon of the EK 2nd Class, the Infantry Assault Badge and the black Wound Badge are also worn. The old 'dice shaker' marching boots were ordered replaced by cheaper ankle boots with web anklets from February 1941, but combat infantry were generally the last troops affected, and individuals clung to their old boots as long as possible.

The service cap for enlisted ranks was similar to the officers' type but of poorer materials, with a leather chin strap replacing the cords. Ordered as barracks dress headgear for Unterscharführer and above in 1939, it was later authorised as a private purchase walking-out item for more junior ranks. In the field it remained the sign of a senior NCO. Regulations concerning *Waffenfarbe* were as described under A3.

F2: Infantry signaller, SS-Pz-Gren-Regt. 24 'Danmark', 11. SS-Frw-Pz-Gren-Div. 'Nordland'; Eastern Front, 1944

A Danish volunteer in typical late-war service dress of a W-SS enlisted man. The 1943 field cap bears conventional insignia. The 'utility' field blouse of wartime manufacture has a field grey collar and unpleated pockets, and is worn with the long *Keilhose* issued from 1943, gathered by drawstrings into canvas anklets. For walking-out the collar was normally worn open over a shirt and black tie; shirts changed from brown to field grey in mid-1943. The 'sun-wheel' rune on the right collar patch was the divisional insignia; but note that it was used as a vehicle insignia by the 'Wiking' Division. Above the block-lettered regimental cuff title 'Danmark' is the white-on-black 'Blitz' of an SS-trained signaller; W-SS personnel trained by Army establishments usually wore the Army's yellow 'Blitz' on an oval green or field grey patch on the right forearm. The Danish national armshield appears below the sleeve eagle. In most cases W-SS volunteers wore these shields on the left forearm, as in F1, but many photos show them on the left upper arm. Some examples of shields worn on the right upper arm—the position used by the Army foreign volunteer

Frw. Legion Norwegen, 1942; interestingly, no collar patches are worn. There were several types of Norwegian volunteers' armshield; this is in the shape of the national flag in red with a blue-on-white applied cross. Another type had the cross centred on a heater shield of red, the whole outlined black.

legions from which these W-SS units were formed—are visible in photos.

F3: SS-Oberscharführer, SS-Pz-Abt. (Sturmgeschütz) 11 'Hermann von Salza', 11. SS-Frw-Pz-Gren-Div. 'Nordland'; Eastern Front, 1944

The field grey version of the black armoured uniform was issued to 'LAH' SP gun crews for the 1941 Balkan campaign, but was not general issue until August 1942. The same practices regarding shoulder straps and collar patches as described under B1 applied; only the 'LAH' used NCO collar *Tresse*. The *Schiffchen*, M1943 field cap, service cap, or 'old style field cap'—as here—were worn, as appropriate to date and rank. The cap and shoulder straps are piped

Well-known but dramatic photo showing a wounded SS-Ostubaf. (note patch on left sleeve) with veteran NCOs and young soldiers of the 'Hitlerjugend' Div. in Normandy, June 1944. The former are probably ex-'LAH' personnel. Note mixed use of W-SS and Italian Army camouflage material.

artillery red: SP anti-tank units generally piped in pink, but the variety of SP artillery units and the ever-multiplying regulations for their *Waffenfarben* on black and grey uniforms produced such chaos than no generalisation is possible. One feature peculiar to 'Hermann von Salza' was the edging of collar patches in red; this is reported by a printed source, and Beadle and Hartmann publish a photo which appears to confirm it. Note that the battalion wore *Sigrunen*, instead of the sun-wheel rune of their division.

G1: SS-Unterscharführer, 1/sSS-Pz-Abt. 501; Normandy, 1944

From photos of Balthasar 'Bobby' Woll, gunner in the Tiger E tank of SS-Hstuf. Michael Wittmann, commander of 1 Kompanie in the heavy tank battalion of 1. SS-Panzer-Korps 'LAH'—schwere SS-Panzer-Abteilung 501. The black Panzer troops' *Schiffchen* was in use side by side with a black version of the M1943 field cap until the end of the war. The black shirt was an affectation common in Panzer units, which dramatically showed off the Knight's Cross at the throat. The assault gun and tank troops of W-SS formations had received a one-piece camouflage-printed coverall in spring 1943; in January 1944 a camouflaged drill version of the two-piece Panzer vehicle uniform was introduced, non-water repellent, non-reversible, and printed on one side only. The shoulder straps from the black uniform are worn, with silver NCO *Tresse*, pink *Waffenfarbe*, and a slipover loop with the Corps monogram 'LAH'. On the breast are the Panzer Assault Badge, black Wound Badge, and EK 1st Class. This NCO is handling the two-round box for 88mm shells.[1]

G2: SS-Standartenführer Kurt Meyer ('Panzermeyer'), commanding 12. SS-Pz-Div. 'Hitlerjugend'; Normandy, 1944

Meyer became, at 33, Germany's youngest divisional commander when Fritz Witt was killed some ten days after D-Day. The impressive record of 'HJ' under his command was marred by the murder of Canadian prisoners, for which Meyer was held responsible and imprisoned after the war. Accompanied by his Alsatian, 'Panzermeyer' is seen here in field cap, jacket and trousers made of Italian Army camouflage material. The 'LAH' seems to have brought stocks back from Italy to France in December 1943, and it is much in evidence in Normandy photos made up into one-piece tank coveralls, jackets, trousers and caps, often mixed with German camouflage issue, particularly in the ranks of 'LAH' and 'HJ'. Meyer wore standard silver-on-black cap badges; a black shirt displaying his *Ritterkreuz* with Oakleaves; and—apparently—a green-on-black sleeve rank patch.

G3: SS infantry NCO, 12. SS-Panzer-Division 'Hitlerjugend'; Normandy, 1944

A typical combination of camouflage items worn by one of the veteran 'LAH' NCOs who formed the cadre of this division. Groups of foliage attachment loops were often sewn horizontally at the

[1] Illustrations of various W-SS armoured crew uniforms will be found in Vanguard No. 12, *Sturmartillerie and Panzerjäger*; No. 16, *The PzKpfw III*; No. 18, *The PzKpfw IV*; No. 20, *The Tiger Tanks* and No. 21, *The PzKpfw V Panther*, all published by this company.

tops of the smock sleeves and back, and on the front and back of the shoulders. The 1942 camouflaged field cap acquired standard insignia by an order of December 1942; these were made in green on black and brown on black, for use on the spring/summer and autumn/winter sides of the material respectively. Since the cap had no buttoned flap they fitted easily on the front. Caps continued to be worn without badges in many cases.

G4: SS-Schütze, 12. SS-Panzer-Division 'Hitlerjugend'; Normandy, 1944

A 17-year-old infantryman armed with a *Panzerschreck*, with a Walther P. 38 as personal sidearm. He wears the camouflaged drill uniform ordered in March 1944; photos show that mixtures of old and new pattern camouflage items were common in this division. The four-pocket tunic and trousers were neither water-repellent nor reversible. The only authorised insignia were the SS sleeve eagle and, where appropriate, the green-on-black sleeve rank patches. In fact on frequently sees this uniform complete with shoulder straps, and sometimes even with collar patches. The eagle was supposed to be in either green or brown on black, but conventional silver-grey eagles were often used, and many photos show the jacket without insignia of any type.

H1: Leutnant, SS-Polizei-Division; Eastern Front, early 1942

This formation was not formally taken into the W-SS until February 1942; prior to that date Police ranks were used, and Police insignia were worn on Police or Army uniform, with the sole addition of the W-SS sleeve eagle. The change to W-SS collar patches and cap badges seems to have been rather gradual after that date. This officer retains the Army-pattern field cap in Police green, with silver officers' piping, and a silver-on-black Police eagle badge. The Police green tunic has a dark green collar with silver-on-bright-green Police lace; and the same bright green appears as shoulder strap underlay. I have taken a slight liberty in showing the divisional cuff title, a Police eagle device, at this date; it was introduced in April 1942, and the order which authorised it replaced the collar lace with standard *Sigrunen* and W-SS ranking. Prior to this SS members serving in the division wore silver runes on a green patch on the left breast—see Plate E1.

Officers of the 'Handschar' Div., probably photographed early in the career of this formation. They have not acquired the divisional collar patch, and wear runes or a blank patch. One (left) can just be seen to wear an Army breast eagle on his left sleeve, a common expedient. From the tone of this print the red version of the fez seems to be worn here. Note two slightly different types of 'Styrian' mountain gaiter, and mountain boots. All wear the standard SS officer's belt buckle.

H2: SS-Hauptscharführer of Feldgendarmerie, 13. W-Geb-Div. der SS 'Handschar'; Balkans, 1944

From a photo showing a *Volksdeutsche* Croatian NCO and SS member (see breast runes) serving with the divisional military police troop. Several different styles of fez were worn. The taller, red style with black tassel was for parade and walking-out, and the squatter, field grey type with or without tassel for field and barracks dress. The latter has been described as green, but an apparently original example in a French collection is definitely field grey. A conical type is also sometimes observed. All bore conventional W-SS cloth insignia. The collar of the Army-style field blouse

bears the divisional patch on the right, and ranking on the left. (*Erratum:* This painting should show silver NCO *Tresse* braid around front and bottom edges of the collar, as in plate C3. *Ed*) The shoulder straps are piped in the orange *Waffenfarbe* of the military police. The orange Police eagle replaced the W-SS eagle on the sleeve of Feldgendarmerie personnel. Below it is the Croatian volunteers' red and white armshield. The Army's grey-on-brown 'Feldgendarmerie' cuff title, initially worn by W-SS police, was replaced by an order of August 1942 with a silver-grey and black 'SS-Feldgendarmerie' pattern. Finally, in October 1944, the cuff title was discarded altogether, and the Police sleeve eagle was replaced by the W-SS eagle. The Army Feldgendarmerie duty gorget continued to be worn; the bosses, eagle and script were in luminous finish. The Edelweiss arm patch of W-SS mountain units is seen on the right sleeve, and German Sports and Riding Proficiency badges on the left breast.

H3: Waffen-Grenadier, 14. W-Gren-Div. der SS; Eastern Front, 1944

From a mid-1944 photo; the several insignia changes within this formation are only partially understood today. The wartime 'economy' field blouse has a grey collar, unpleated pockets, and standard infantry private's shoulder straps. Men joining the division are known to have retained their previous collar patches for some time, and many wore plain black right hand patches for some months. At some date in 1943 or early 1944 the rampant lion motif was adopted, and in this period a yellow and pale blue armshield was worn as illustrated. From November 1944 to April 1945 it appears that the 'trident of Volodymyr' *may* have replaced the lion, but the armshield was unchanged.

H4: Waffen-Sturmbannführer, 20. W-Gren-Div. der SS; Baltic coast, mid-1944

From a portrait of the Estonian officer Alfons Rebane in Beadle and Hartmann. The Army-style field blouse and W-SS infantry major's shoulder straps are conventional; note silver Close Combat Clasp, awarded for hand-to-hand fighting by unsupported infantry for a total of 30 days. The collar motif of this division seems initially to have been the SS-runes, associated in early 1944 with an Army-style armshield: an ornate shield in diagonal stripes of pale blue, black and white with three yellow lions passant guardant superimposed one above the other centrally, the shield worn on the upper right arm. By the battle of Narva in summer 1944 the second type of collar patch, illustrated here, was in use. A third style bore an 'E' in the bend of an armoured arm holding a sword. The two latter styles are normally seen with a left upper sleeve armshield as illustrated, without the lions; known variations are straight or scalloped upper edges, and diagonal or horizontal stripes.

The last new item of uniform to be manufactured before the end of the war was the '1944 field blouse' based on British battledress. Of field grey, it bore all normal W-SS insignia when worn by that organisation. This captured SS-Ustuf. photographed in 1945 also displays the silver-piped turn-up of the *Fliegermütze* cap. The blouse had five front buttons, the lower two being set on the broad waistband. (Imp. War Mus.)

H5: SS-Sturmmann, 'Britisches Freikorps', 1944–45

Distasteful as it is to record the existence of this 'unit', it is more significant to recall that despite widespread recruiting drives among many tens

of thousands of British Commonwealth prisoners, this squalid group never achieved a strength of 30 men. Conditions in PoW camps were much grimmer than post-war film studios might lead us to imagine; yet, although the recruiters' ideological claptrap was backed by explicit offers of cash, limited personal freedom, and sexual opportunities, the leaflets they distributed were usually—and ostentatiously—employed as toilet paper. A handful of 'British Free Corps' men were genuinely pro-Nazi and anti-Communist fanatics. Some were near-morons, cynically exploited by stronger characters. The bulk of them were simply contemptible traitors who accepted the tawdry bait held out to them. They led a confused and pointless existence as pawns in the propaganda game; though armed, they were never issued ammunition and never saw combat. In March–April 1945 two squads totalling about 20 men were briefly attached to the 11. SS-Frw-Pz-Gren-Div. 'Nordland' when it lay in a quiet sector of the Eastern Front. When that formidable division moved to the Berlin area for combat duty the BFC group were specifically excluded, apparently on the orders of Felix Steiner himself. One or perhaps two BFC men, no more, fought and died as individual volunteers in the rubble of Berlin; the rest wandered until captured. They were more or less leniently treated; a couple of ringleaders were hanged, and most of the rest served prison terms. There seems to have been a decent effort to weigh up individual responsibility.

Only one indisputably authentic wartime photo of a BFC man in W-SS uniform is known to me. We follow it closely here. The collar patch shows three heraldic 'leopards passant guardant' in silver-grey on black, and the usual ranking patch is worn on the left. A cuff title is visible but illegible in the photo; Beadle and Hartmann publish a reconstructed drawing of block lettering, 'Britisches Freikorps'. An armshield seems to be just visible in the photo; again, Beadle and Hartmann reconstruct it as illustrated here. The photo shows the lower part of the uniform exactly as in F2. A photo published by Beadle and Hartmann purporting to show BFC men in an assortment of winter combat clothing during their short period at the front seems to me, for various reasons, to be unconvincing. (As this goes to press an authentic photo showing these sleeve insignia has been reliably reported: I have not seen it, but as described its only difference is perhaps the placing of the armshield beneath the eagle on a private's tunic.)

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Several of these works are now hard to find, and others are expensive. For readers who wish to limit their expenditure and to avoid duplication I have no hesitation in recommending the series by Roger James Bender and Hugh Page Taylor, published by Bender Publishing of P.O. Box 1425, Mountain View, Calif. 94040, USA. This series is also available from specialist military dealers in Britain. Though not cheap, it represents the best type of careful, attractively presented research, with progressive up-dating of previous volumes in each new edition. Further volumes are awaited, with some impatience!

Notes sur les planches en couleur

A1: Casquette de 1937, alors liserée de blanc; tunique 1937 des Waffen-SS avec col gris liseré d'argent et des poches de hanches coupées dans le biais; les culottes sont de couleur contrastée, 'neu-grau'. Pattes d'épaules doublées de blanc à cette date. **A2:** Casquette de général liserée d'argent. La tunique et le manteau ont des cols 'Armée' verts. Le manteau des généraux a des revers gris-clairs. Le chevron de la manche indique un temps de service antérieur, dans l'armée ou la police. **A3:** Tunique d'Armée très portée par les SS à partir de 1940. La tenue de sortie a des pantalons liserés; un poignard; pas de ceinturon. Il y avait une certaine confusion dans les réglements relatifs au liseré à la couleur de l'arme à cette époque; nous montrons le liseré rouge de l'artillerie.

B1: Uniforme noir des Panzer, porté sans liseré rose de col par les SS; cette unité portait cependant quelquefois des pièces de col liserées de rose. Le brassard de manchette 'Adolf Hitler' identifie cette unité. **B2:** Casquette de campagne du type 'officiers' 'vieux style' sans cordons ni renfort rigide. Blouse de camouflage portée dès le début de la guerre et utilisée par l'ensemble des troupes de combat à partir de 1940. Les officiers de cette division portaient souvent la tête de mort sur les deux pièces de col dès le début de la guerre. **B3:** Tunique grise de SS d'avant-guerre; l'insigne de col a été enlevé. Calot de modèle 1937. Mitraillette MP.28, sacoches de munitions en cuir; modèle ancien de bretelles en treillis.

C1: Casquette camouflée réglementaire, M1942; culottes de cheval avec pièces de cuir. **C2:** Equipement d'assaut avec harnais de treillis attaché aux bretelles. **C3:** Typique chef de section d'infanterie, 1941–43; housse de casque et blouse de camouflage; sacoches de munitions de MP.40; grenades et poignard placés au mieux dans l'équipement.

D1: Blouse de camouflage pour temps de neige, coupée dans un drap et portée au-dessus de la capote. **D2:** 'Parka' matelassée d'hiver réglementaire des SS en 1942, avec pantalons portés sur les pantalons d'uniforme. **D3:** Uniforme réglementaire reversible d'hiver de 1943, blanc d'un côté et camouflé de l'autre; casquette de combat M1943; modèle tardif de bretelles en treillis; sacoches de munitions pour StG.44.

E1: Notez l'insigne edelweiss des troupes de montagne sur la casquette et sur la manche; insigne 'Odalrune' de cette division; pantalons et bottes de montagnard. **E2:** Cette unité pénitentiaire de parachutistes portait l'uniforme normal des SS, avec d'habitude la blouse réglementaire de camouflage de la Luftwaffe. **E3:** Tenue tropicale; notez la coupe italienne de la tunique, et le fil brun utilisé pour les insignes de la manche et de la casquette.

F1: Les galons d'argent identifient le sous-officier supérieur de chaque unité. Insigne de col de la division; insigne flamand sur la manche. **F2:** Les bottes courtes et les guêtres en treillis étaient plus courantes vers 1942–45. Pour la tenue de sortie, le col de la tunique était ouvert sur la cravate. La chemise brune fut abandonnée pour du gris en 1943. Notez l'insigne de col de la division. Insigne de manche danois, insigne de manche de transmetteur. **F3:** Pièces de col liserées de rouge apparemment exclusives de cette unité et portées sur une version en gris de l'uniforme des Panzer distribué aux unités d'artillerie autonomes.

G1: Version camouflée de l'uniforme des Panzer particulière aux SS; calot noir encore porté en même temps que le modèle noir de la casquette de combat M1943. **G2:** Insigne ajouté à la casquette camouflée à partir de la fin de 1942. Beaucoup de matériel camouflé provenant de stocks italiens était utilisé en Normandie. **G3:** L'usage de tissus camouflés de modèles différents dans un même uniforme de soldat est typique de 1944. **G4:** Nouvel uniforme deux-pièces camouflé réglementaire de mars 1944; arme anti-tank 'Panzerschreck'.

H1: Insigne de police, à part l'aigle SS de la manche, porté jusqu'au printemps 1942. Le brassard illustré ici à fins d'information ne fut pas strictement porté jusqu'à ce que les autres insignes deviennent de style SS, en avril 1942. **H2:** Fez et insigne de col particuliers à cette division; insigne croatien sur la manche; brassard et gorget de la 'Feldgendarmerie'. **H3:** Insigne de col de cette division; insigne ukrainien sur la manche. **H4:** Il existe plusieurs versions de l'insigne estonien de col et de manche; ceux-ci ont été relevés sur une photo du W-Stubaf. Rebane au cours des batailles de Narva. **H5:** Moins de 30 hommes se portèrent volontaires pour former cette 'unité' déshonorante qui n'entra jamais en action. L'illustration est copiée d'après la seule photo connue d'un membre de la BFC en uniforme.

Farbtafeln

A1: 1937er Schirmmütze, zu diesem Zeitpunkt mit weisser Paspelierung. 1937er W-SS Rock mit silberpaspeliertem grauem Kragen, schräge Rocktaschen; Reithosen in abstechender Farbe, 'neu-grau'. Schulterklappen zu diesem Zeitpunkt weiss gegengesetzt. **A2:** Silberpaspelierte Generalsschirmmütze. Rock und Mantel haben grüne Krägen im Armeestil. Der Mantel für die Generäle hat hellgraue Aufschläge. Armelwinkel zeigen frühere Armee- oder Polizeidienst an. **A3:** Der Rock im Armeestil wurde von 1940 an viel in der W-SS getragen. Ausgehuniform hat paspelierte Hosen; Dolch, keinen Gürtel. Unklarheit herrscht zu diesem Zeitpunkt in den Bestimmungen über die Paspelierung in der Waffenfarbe; wir zeigen Artillerie-rot.

B1: Schwarze Panzeruniform in der W-SS ohne rosa Paspelierung getragen, jedoch trug diese Einheit manchmal rosa-paspelierte Kragenspiegel. 'Adolf Hitler' Manschette identifiziert die Einheit. **B2:** Althergebrachte Form einer Offiziersschirmmütze, jedoch ohne Kordel oder Versteifung. Tarnungskittel vom Kriegsausbruch an getragen, üblich unterhalb der Kampftruppen von 1940 an. Offiziere dieser Division trugen frühzeitig im Krieg oft das Totenkopfabzeichen auf beiden Kragenspiegeln. **B3:** Total grauer Vorkriegs-W-SS Rock; Kragenabzeichen entfernt. Feldmütze im Muster von 1937. MP.28 Maschinenpistole, lederne Munitionsbeutel; früherer Typ.

C1: Tarnschirmmütze, 1942er Ausgabe; Reithosen mit Lederverstärkung. **C2:** Sturmausrüstung mit Leinen-Gürtelzeug, welches an festgehakt ist. **C3:** Typischer Infanterie-Gruppenführer, 1941–43; getarnter Helmüberzug und Kittel; MP.40, Munitionsbeutel; Handgranaten und Dolch in die Ausrüstung gesteckt, wo immer es passte.

D1: Schneetarnungskittel aus einem Bettuch hergestellt, über dem Übermantel getragen. **D2:** 1942er-Ausgabe des W-SS wattierten Winterparka und Überhosen. **D3:** 1943er-Ausgabe einer umkehrbaren weiss getarnten W-SS Winteruniform; 1943er Einheitsfeldmütze; spätere StG.44 Munitionsbeutel.

E1: Bemerke das Edelweiss-Abzeichen der Gebirgstruppen auf Mütze und Arm; Odalrunen Kragenabzeichen dieser Division; Bergsteigerhosen und Stiefel. **E2:** Diese Straf-Fallschirmeinheit trug normale W-SS Uniform gewöhnlich mit getarnten Kitteln der Luftwaffenausgabe. **E3:** Tropisch Uniform, bemerke den italienischen Rockschnitt, und den braunen Faden der an Arm- und Mützenabzeichen benutzt wurde.

F1: Silberne Armelstreifen lassen den Spiess jeder Einheit erkennen. Divisionelles Kragenabzeichen; flämisches Armabzeichen. **F2:** Kurze Stiefel und Leinwand-Gamaschen waren üblicher in den Jahren 1942–45. Für die Ausgehuniform, offener Rockkragen, die Krawatte zeigend. Das braune Hemd wechselte zu grau im Jahr 1943. Bemerke das divisionelle Kragenabzeichen, dänisches Armabzeichen, Funkers Armabzeichen. **F3:** Rotpaspelierte Kragenspiegel, angeblich ausschliesslich für diese Einheit, getragen an der grauen Fassung der Panzeruniform, wie die der mit Sturmgeschützen bewaffneten Artillerieeinheiten zugeteilte.

G1: Spezielle W-SS Tarnausführung der Panzeruniform; schwarze Feldmütze noch gleichzeitig zusammen mit der vorgeschriebenen schwarzen Fassung der Einheitsfeldmütze von 1943 getragen. **G2:** Abzeichen der getarnten Mütze vom Ende 1942 hinzugefügt. Viel Tarnungsmaterial aus italienischen Armeebeständen wurde in der Normandy gesehen. **G3:** Benutzung von verschiedenen Arten von Tarnungsmaterial in der Uniform desselben Mannes typisch für 1944. **G4:** Neue zweiteilige Tarnuniform von der Ausgabe im März 1944; Panzerschreck Panzerabwehrwaffe.

H1: Polizeiabzeichen—ausser dem W-SS Armeladler—bis zum Frühjahr 1942 getragen. Genaugenommen, wurde das abgebildete Manschettenband nicht eher getragen, bis die anderen Abzeichen zum W-SS Stil wechselten April 1942, jedoch hier zur Information gezeigt. **H2:** Fez-Kopfbedeckung und Kragenabzeichen sind eine Besonderheit dieser Division; kroatisches Armabzeichen; Manschettenband und Ringkragen der Feldgendarmerie. **H3:** Kragenabzeichen dieser Division; ukrainisches Armabzeichen. **H4:** Verschiedene Ausführungen des Kragenabzeichens und estländischen Armabzeichen sind bekannt; diese Ausführung ist einem Photo des W-Subaf. Rebane zur Zeit der Narva-Schlachten entnommen. **H5:** Weniger als 30 Männer voluntierten für diese schändliche 'Einheit', die niemals in den Kampf eingriff. Die Abbildung ist von dem einzigen bekannten authentischen Photo eines Mitgliedes des BFC kopiert.

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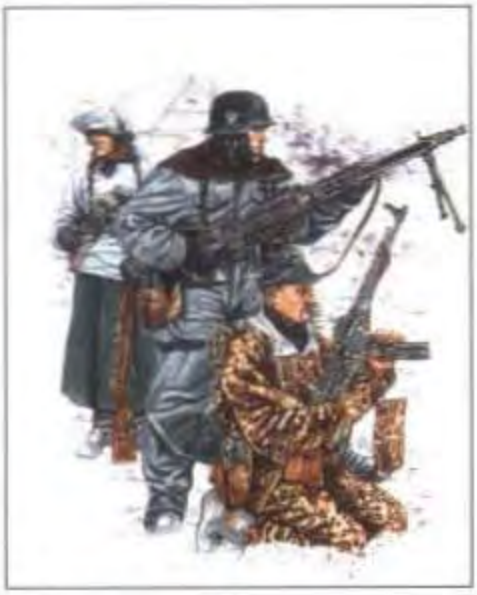

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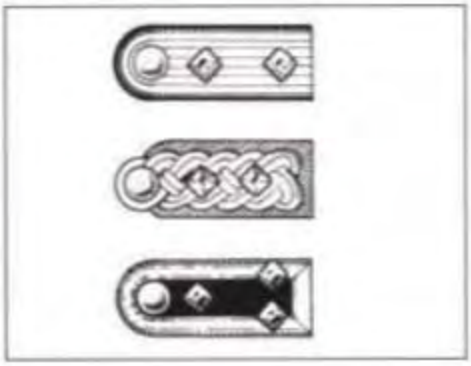

Diagrams

Photographs

The Waffen-SS

In the early 1920s, a tiny group was formed within the SA to serve as Hitler's personal bodyguard. Originally labelled the 'Adolf Hitler', they later became known as the SS – Schutz Staffeln, or 'protection squads'. From these humble beginnings, the SS rose to a nominal strength of 38 divisions of over 800,000 men by 1945, representing a sizeable portion of Germany's land forces and more importantly a quarter of her tank forces and a third of her mechanised infantry. Martin Windrow provides a splendid in-depth review of the history, uniforms and insignia of the infamous Waffen-SS.

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